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SERMONS
UPON
DEATH,
AND
Eternal Judgment.

BY

WILLIAM BATES, D.D.

LONDON;
Printed by *J. D.* for *Brabazon Aylmer*, at the Three Pigeons against the Royal Exchange in *Cornhil*. 1683.

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To the Right Honourable

RACHEL

Lady Russel.

MADAM,

OF all Affairs for the compaſſing whereof Men are ſo diligent and ſollicitous, there is none of that abſolute neceſsity, and high importance, as the Preparation for Death *and* Judgment. *This requires the whole Man in his beſt vigour, and ſhould be the* Work of the Day, *but 'tis uſually delayed till the melancholy Evening of Age, or the twilight of Death. The Trifles of this World divert them from that main buſineſs, to which all other things ſhould be ſubordinate. It equally deſerves Wonder and Compaſsion, that* Death *which is ſo conſtantly in Mens view,*

ſhould be ſo ſeldom the matter of their application, when all are of the ſame Glaſs, made of the ſame frail natural Principles; and no Argument is more frequently and pathetically urged upon them.

'Tis not ſtrange that deep Truths, that by the ſtrength and exerciſe of the mind are drawn like Gold out of the Mines, have no efficacy upon thoſe that are not capable of underſtanding them: but the Doctrins of Death, *and* Judgment *after it, are plain Truths, by Natural, Moral, and Divine Evidence known to all, yet no more affect Men, than a Paradox of incredible Novelty. If the Doctrine of* Eternal Judgment *were but a probable Opinion, controverted with equal Arguments, yet 'tis a matter of ſuch vaſt concernment, that Reaſon requires all our poſſible diligence to avoid an eternal evil that may be, the loſs of cœleſtial Glory, and the Torments of Hell: But ſince*

'tis

'tis an infallible Truth, as certain as the Word of God, 'tis a Miracle to aſtoniſh Heaven and Earth, that Men live as careleſly as if they ſhould never die, and die as ſecurely as if they ſhould not live in the next ſtate, to receive the juſt puniſhment of their Sins. They are fearleſs whilſt Death is far off in their thoughts: and when Age has ſnowed upon their heads, that no Marks of decaying Nature ſhould appear, make their own Winter to flouriſh with anothers Spring. But 'tis in vain, for Death knows them under their diſguiſe, and will not ſtay beyond the appointed time. And in that deciſive hour, Infidelity or Preſumption hardens Men to paſs as quietly and boldly in appearance into another world, as unfeigned Faith, and a regular lively Hope in the Promiſes of the Goſpel. But as deceitful Phyſick ſtops the Fit for the preſent, that will return more violently and fatally afterwards: So a counterfeit

counterfeit short Peace transmits them to everlasting Sorrows.

The design of the following SERMONS *is to awaken Men, that they may be wise and consider their latter end: to secure an interest in our Redeemer, who has disarmed Death of its Sting, and made that Enemy our Friend: and to practise dying every day, by withdrawing their hearts from the vanities of this transient World, that have such a pernicious influence to excite the carnal appetites, and stupify the Conscience, which are the true causes of their sin and misery. And what can be more powerful to render them temperate and sober in the use of present things, vigilant and serious in their preparations for their great and final Change, than the remembrance that* Death *is immediately attended with* Judgment, *and* Judgment *with Blessedness or Misery for ever. I know this Argument is naturally displeasing*

pleaſing, but the uſefulneſs ſhould recommend it to our moſt ſolemn and compoſed thoughts, before all the vain entertainments of the Fancy and ſenſual affections. As Herbs of Medicinal virtue, that are not pleaſing to the ſight or ſmell, yet are valued by the Skilful as treaſures of Health; and preferr'd before the faireſt Flowers that are perfum'd and painted by Nature, ſo as to excel the richeſt luſtre of Solomon's *Glory.*

The Body is in a continual Conſumption, and no Art can long preſerve it: but whilſt the outward Man *is irrecoverably declining and waſting, if the* Inward Man *be aſcending and renewing to perfection, the advantage is incomparable. O how comfortable is it to a holy Believer in the parting hour to commit his Spirit into the hands of his Heavenly Father! (for thus he is authorized and encouraged by our Saviour's Example.) and lay down*

the

the Fleſh to reſt in Hope: *for Chriſt is the Guardian of the Grave,* has the Keys of Death, *and will revive the Bodies of his Saints incorruptible and immortal, the Copies of his own glorious Body.*

Madam, *I ſhall not attempt the celebrating your Ladiſhips Vertues, that render you a bright Ornament of your Sex, and more truly Honourable than your Noble Deſcent and Alliance: but direct my beſt Deſires to God, that your Family may be a ſingular and eminent Example of the Divine Favour: that the fading Gloſs of this World may not deceive you, but* your Heart may be above where your Treaſure is; *that you may live to God and your Soul, for Heaven and Eternity. I am,*

Madam,

Your Honours very humble and faithful Servant,

WILLIAM BATES.

SERMONS UPON DEATH.

HEB. 2. 15.

And deliver them, who through fear of Death were all their life-time subject to Bondage.

IN the first Chapter of this Epistle, the *Proofs* of the Eternal Deity of Christ are produced with that evidence of *Scripture-Light*, that only *a vailed Heart*, obstinate Infidelity

can reſiſt. The Medium which the inſpired Pen-man makes uſe of is, the comparing him with the Angels, the moſt noble Flower of the Creation, and ſhewing that he is infinitely dignified above them. This he does by a ſtrong connexion of Arguments: Firſt, By his Title that is divinely high and peculiar to himſelf. He is declared by the Teſtimony of
Verſ. 4, 5. the Eternal Father to *be his Son*, in the moſt proper and ſublime ſence: *begotten of him*, and therefore having the ſame eſſential Perfections of the God-head in their uncreated Glory. But the Angels are not dignified with this Name in any places of Scripture, where the Excellency of the Angels is in the fulleſt terms expreſſed. And that this Name is taken from his Nature, is clearly proved: becauſe Adoration is due

to

to him upon this account, even from the Angels of the higheſt Order. *When he bringeth in the firſt-begotten into the World, he ſaith, And let all the Angels of God worſhip him.* Verſ. 6.

Divine Worſhip is a Prerogative inſeparably annext to the Deity, both upon the account of the ſupream Excellencies of the Nature of God, and his Relation to Angels and Men as Creator, and Preſerver, the Fountain of their Being and Happineſs. This without the moſt open defiance of his Authority, cannot be given to a mere Creature; and by the Command of God himſelf, is to be performed as a reſpect due to the filial God-head. The Argument proceeds from the Name to the Offices. *Of the Angels he ſaith, Who maketh the Angels Spirits, and his Miniſters a* Verſ. 7.

Deut. 6. 13. & 10. 20.

flame of Fire. They are the prime Inſtruments of his Providence, moſt zealous and active to accompliſh his pleaſure. But the Son *is God*, not by Analogy and Deputation as Princes are, nor with a limitation and diminution, as *Moſes* was made *a God to Pharaoh*, but abſolutely and really as ſubſiſting in the Divine Nature: And conſequently he is the Supreme King, and to him the Enſigns of Majeſty divinely Royal are aſcribed. *But unto the Son he ſaith, Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever, a Scepter of Righteouſneſs is the Scepter of thy Kingdom*: Whereas the Scepters of Earthly Kings are often unrighteouſly manag'd, and their Thrones ruinouſly fall. There is a further Confirmation from his Works, that are divinely great and glorious, wherein no Creature

Verſ. 8.

ture has any ſhare of Efficiency. The making of the World, is aſcrib'd to him. *Thou Lord in the beginning haſt laid the Foundation of the Earth, and the Heavens are the Works of thy Hands.* *Verſ.* 10.

The Divine Attributes, the peculiar Character of the Deity belong to him: Eternity and Immutability. The moſt ſolid parts of the viſible Creation *ſhall periſh and be changed: but thou remaineſt, and art the ſame.* His Life is an intire, uniform, unchangable Perfection. His Glory and Felicity are in the ſame invariable Tenor for ever poſſeſt by him. Laſtly, The Son ſits in that quality *at the right Hand of the Father*, in the Society of Empire, as equal to him in Power and Honour, commanding all in the viſible and inviſible World, moſt eaſily and irreſiſtibly, tho' gra- *Verſ.* 13.

dually ſubduing his Enemies to a conſummate Victory. But the Angels, ſo numerous and power-
Verſ. 14. ful, *are miniſtring Spirits*, employed for the defence and benefit of the Church.

From this ſummary account we may underſtand how firmly the Divinity of Chriſt is eſtabliſh'd in the Scripture. For thoſe Paſſages of the Prophets, that ſpeak of the God of *Iſrael* as Creator, and the ſole object of Adoration are directly referr'd to Jeſus Chriſt. And the Name
Pſal. 97. 9. *Jehovah*, the Majeſty of which conſiſts in its being incommunicable is attributed to him. This is the Foundation upon which that whole Fabrick of the Goſpel is built. The Office of Mediator in the prophetical, prieſtly, and regal adminiſtration is neceſſarily join'd with the Divinity of his

his Perſon. And the revelation of it from Heaven, is as clear as the Sun is viſible in the Firmament. All the Difficulties in our conceiving this great Myſtery of Godlineſs, are but like the ſhadows that attend the Light. And all the heretical ſubtilties to pervert the ſence of ſuch plain and poſitive Texts, are as impertinent as impious.

This being eſtabliſh'd, the Apoſtle proceeds to give an account of the Son of God's aſſuming the Humane Nature, and ſubmitting to Sufferings and Death. This is a Divine Secret ſo miraculouſly ſtrange, that the Contrivance was without the Compaſs of the Angelical Minds, and the diſcovery of it, is only by ſupernatural Revelation: but when revealed, the account of it is ſo open and conſentaneous to rea-

ſon, as being the moſt congruous Means for the illuſtration of God's Glory in the ſaving loſt Men, that the humane Mind, if not deeply corrupted with the tincture of Prejudice, muſt conſent to *it as worthy of all acceptation.*

The ſubſtance of his reaſoning is this, That it was the product of the moſt wiſe, merciful, and righteous Counſel of God, that the Saviour of Men ſhould have communion with them in their Nature, that he might have a right to redeem them by his Alli-
Chap. 2. 11. ance and Propinquity: for *he that ſanctifies, and they that are ſanctified, are all one*: and that he ſhould undergo ſufferings, even to death, for the price of their Redemption, and the remedy of their Infirmities: *Foraſmuch as the Children are partakers of Fleſh and Blood,*

Blood, he alſo likewiſe took part of the ſame, that through Death he might deſtroy him that had the Power of Death, that is the Devil: And deliver them who through fear of Death, were all their Lives ſubject to Bondage.

The Devil is ſaid to have the Power of Death.

1. Becauſe he induces men to commit ſin, that meritoriouſly renders them liable to Death. He tempted the firſt Man *cum effectu, and was a Murderer from the beginning.*

2. In that he inſpires them with furious thoughts, and inflames their Paſſions, from whence proceed Strifes and Wars, that efficiently cauſe Death. He is ſupreme in all the Arts of Miſchief, and always intent upon Evil. 'Tis by his inſtigation that Men become like raging Beaſts, ani-

animated and bent on mutual ſlaughter.

3. Becauſe he is many times the Executioner of God's Wrath, and inflicts Death upon rebellious and incorrigible Sinners. 'Tis recorded by the Pſalmiſt, Pſal. 78. 49. That *God caſt upon the Egyptians the fierceneſs of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble; by ſending evil Angels:* thoſe Princes of the Air, the Inſtruments of the Thunder and fiery ſtorm of Hail that deſtroyed them.

4. Becauſe he makes Death more formidable to ſinners, by heightning their guilty Fears of God's Tribunal. The falſe Spirit, in tempting Men to ſin, puts on blandiſhments, but afterward he is a ſevere accuſer of them to God, and to themſelves.

Laſtly, This Title may ſignify his tormenting ſinners with un-

unrelenting cruelty in Hell, which is the ſecond Death.

Now theſe Evils being the penal Conſequence of ſin, our Saviour by his Death appeas'd the injur'd Juſtice of God, and thereby deſtroyed the cruel tyranny of the Devil. *As the Lamb of God*, in the Notion of a Sacrifice, he overcomes our ſpiritual Enemies. Sin, Satan, and Death, lie vanquiſht at the foot of his Croſs. Beſides, our Saviour having felt ſuch ſorrows and infirmities as are uſual to his People, by that correſpondence and reſemblance between them, is compaſſionately inclin'd to relieve them.

I ſhall now inſiſt upon the bleſſed Privilege of Believers ſet down in the Text, *viz.*

That Jeſus Chriſt by his Death, frees his People from the

the ſervile tormenting fear of Death.

In proſecuting the Point, I ſhall, 1. conſider the account the Scripture gives of Death's entrance into the World. 2. Shew what the fear of Death includes, and the Bondage conſequent to it. 3. How the Death of Chriſt frees us from the thraldom of that fear. 4. Who are partakers of this bleſſed Privilege.

And then apply it.

I. The Scripture gives an account of Death's entrance into the World, in a three-fold reſpect.

1. As the deſertt of Sin. 2. As the Effect of the divine Decree. 3. As the Sentence of the Law.

1. As the Deſert of Sin. The firſt deſign of the Creator was his own Glory in conjunction with the happineſs of Man. He was

was made accordingly Holy in perfection, placed in Paradiſe, and his ſtate contained all the Ingredients of Felicity proper to his Nature. He was capable of dying, as ſad experience proves, yet no Accident from without, no Diſtemper from within had impair'd his vigour, and made him actually ſubject to Death without ſin. Whilſt innocent he was immortal, not from everlaſting Principles of Nature, but by Divine Preſervation, of which the Tree of Life was the ordained Means and ſacramental Pledg. For God unchangably loves his own Image: and tho' by his Sovereignty and abſolute Power he may reſume the Being he gives, yet his Goodneſs and Covenant were a ſacred aſſurance that Man's happy Life ſhould run parallel with his perſeverance in his Duty.

This

This Immortality was not the ſingular privilege of *Adam*'s Perſon, but had been the Inheritance of all his Progeny. But he ſoon revolting from his juſt Obedience, of Immortal became Mortal, and according to the original eſtabliſhment of Propagation, tranſmitted his Nature with the guilt and poiſon of Sin to all his Poſterity. *Thus by one Man Sin entered into the World, and Death by Sin, and ſo Death paſſed upon all Men, for that all have ſinned.* As his Obedience had been rewarded, ſo his Rebellion is puniſht in all that naturally deſcend from him. From hence it is, that ſo numerous a part of Man-kind are cut off before the commiſſion of actual Sin. Death enters into the Forge of Life, and deſtroys the Conception that newly began to live. And what is more righ-

Rom. 5. 12.

teous

teous than that Man when he diſobeyed the Author of Life, ſhould forfeit his Life and Bleſſedneſs. The Soul voluntarily loſt the ſpiritual Life by forſaking God, therefore unwillingly loſes the natural Life by expulſion from the Body. The Apoſtle declares, *the Wages of Sin is Death*, not only that of the Body, but the Death of the Soul, which is a dreadful Concomitant of it. And from hence we may diſcover the falſe Philoſophy of the wiſeſt Heathens in their Opinion of Death. They judged it to be the primary neceſſity and condition of Nature, fixt by irreſiſtible Fate: and not underſtanding the true and juſt reaſon of its coming into the World, they could not apply a ſufficient Remedy againſt its Evil.

Anima volens perdidit vivere, nolens ergo perdat & vivificare.

*Rom.*6.23.

Hac lege intraverant, ut exirent. *Senec.*

2. As

2. As the Effect of the divine Decree reſpecting Sin. This is diſcovered by revelation in the Word of God, and by the real execution of it. *It is appointed to Men once to die.* This Decree is univerſal and unrepealable. *One Generation paſſeth away, and another Generation cometh*: like the ebbing and flowing of the Sea in its ſtated Periods. Nothing can interrupt or fruſtrate this appointment. There are divers Conditions of Men, and various ways of living in the World; ſome are high in Dignity, others are level with the Earth: ſome walk in a Carpet-way ſmooth and eaſy, others in a thorny and troubleſom: ſome walk on the golden Sands, others on the Mire: but the ſame uncontroulable neceſſity of dying involves all. And what-ever the way be, whether pleaſant or doleful;

*Heb.*9.27.

*Eccleſ.*1.4.

doleful, yet every one paſſes in it with equal ſteps, meaſured by the ſame invariable ſpaces of Hours and Days, and arrive at the ſame common end of Life. Thoſe who are regarded as viſible Deities amongſt Men, that can by their Breath raiſe the Low, and depreſs the Lofty, that have the Lives of millions in their Power, yet when the ordained time is come, as they cannot bribe the accuſing Conſcience for a minutes ſilence, ſo neither delay Death. *I have ſaid ye are Gods, but ye ſhall die like Men.*

3. Death is to be conſidered as the Sentence of the Law. The reaſonable Creature was made under a Law the Rule of his Actions. The moral Law directed him how to continue in his holy and bleſſed State: To which was annext the Precept of

not eating of the Tree of Knowledg of Good and Evil, only as a mark of his Subjection, and for the trial of his Obedience. This Precept had an infallible
Gen. 2. 17. ſanction by the moſt high Lawgiver: *In the day thou eateſt thereof, thou ſhalt die the death.* Man did not keep this Command of ſo eaſy obſervation, and juſtly incurr'd its doom. As Sin is the violation of the Law, ſo Death is the violation of the Sinner in his Nature and Felicity retorted from the Law.

The deaths of Men are very different in their kinds; and are compriſed in the words of *David*
1 *Sam.* 26. 10. concerning *Saul*; *The Lord ſhall ſmite him, or his Day ſhall come to die, or he ſhall deſcend into the Battel, and periſh.* Sometimes they are cut off by the immediate flaming hand of God, for the more exemplary

exemplary revenge of Sin; ſometimes by ſurpriſing Accidents; ſometimes by bloody Contentions; ſometimes by conſuming Diſeaſes. But tho' Death be not uniform, yet 'tis always the execution of the Law upon Offenders. As of thoſe who are condemned by Humane Juſtice, ſome ſuffer a more eaſy and honourable Death, others a more diſgraceful and torturing, ſome are Beheaded, others are Crucified, yet all die as Malefactors. Thus ſome die a natural Death, others a violent, ſome by a gentle preparing ſickneſs without reluctation, others die upon the Rack by ſharp pains: ſome die attended with their Friends, and all ſupplies to ſweeten their Paſſage, others forſaken of all Comforters: yet Death is the ſame Sentence of the Law upon all

Men. And this if duly considered, makes it terrible in whatever ſhape it appears.

II. The next thing to be conſidered is, What the fear of Death includes, and the bondage that is conſequent to it. This I ſhall explain and amplify, by conſidering four things.

1. The nature of Fear in general, as applicable to the preſent Subject.

2. The particular Cauſes that render Death ſo fearful.

3. The degree of this Fear expreſt by Bondage.

4. How it comes to paſs that Men are not always under the actual fear of Death, but ſubject to the Revolutions of it all their lives.

1. I will conſider the nature of Fear in general, as applicable to the preſent Subject. Fear

Fear is a paſſion implanted in Nature, that cauſes a flight from an approaching Eye. Three things are requiſite to qualify the Object and make it fearful.

(1.) The Evil muſt be apprehended. Knowledg, or at leaſt ſuſpicion, excites Fear, by repreſenting an Evil that is likely to ſeize upon us. Till the mind diſcern the danger, the paſſions are unmoved: and imaginary Evils by the mere apprehenſion, are as ſtrongly fear'd as real.

(2.) The Evil muſt be future. For the naked theory of the moſt pernicious Evil does not wound the Soul, but the apprehenſion of falling under it. If reaſon can open an expedient to prevent an Evil, this Paſſion is quiet. And Fear preciſely regards its Object as to come. Preſent Evils induce grief and ſorrow: paſt

Evils by reflection affect with joy, and give a quicker reliſh to preſent felicity. Approaching Evils alarm us with fear.

(3.) The Evil muſt be apprehended as prevalent to make it fearful. For if by compariſon we find our ſtrength ſuperior, we either neglect the Evil for its levity, or determine to encounter it; and reſiſtance is the proper effect of Anger, not of Fear. But when an impendent Evil is too hard for us, the Soul ſhrinks and recoils from it.

Now all theſe Qualifications that make an Object fearful concur in Death.

1. 'Tis an Evil univerſally known. The frequent Funerals are a real demonſtration that ſpeaks ſenſibly to our Eyes, that Death reigns in the World.

2. 'Tis certainly future. All the

the wretched Accidents of this Life, ſuch as concern us in our Perſons, Relations, Eſtates, and Intereſts; a thouſand Diſaſters that a jealous Fear and active Fancy will extend and amplify; as they may, ſo they may not happen to us. And from this mixture of contrary poſſibilities, from the uncertainty of event, Hope that is an inſinuating paſſion mixes with Fear, and derives Comfort. For as ſometimes a a ſuddain Evil ſurpriſes not forethought of, ſo often the Evil that was ſadly expected, never comes to paſs. *But what Man is he that lives, and ſhall not ſee Death?* Who is ſo vain as to pleaſe himſelf with an imagination of Immortality here? *Pſal.* 89. 4.

3. 'Tis a prevalent Evil, from hence the proverbial Expreſſion, *Strong as Death that ſubdues all, cruel as the Grave that ſpares* *Cant.* 8. 8.

none. 'Tis in vain to ſtruggle with the pangs of Death. No Simples in Nature, no Compoſitions of Art, no Influence of the Stars, no Power of Angels, can ſupport the dying Body, or retain the flitting Soul. *There is no Man hath power over the Spirit to retain the Spirit; neither hath he power in the day of Death: and there is no diſcharge in that War.* The Body ſinks in the Conflict, and *Death feeds on its proſtrate prey in the Grave.*

Eccleſiaſt. 8. 8.

2. I ſhall conſider more particularly the Cauſes that render Death ſo fearful to Men. 1. In the apprehenſion of Nature. 2. In the apprehenſion of Conſcience 1. In the apprehenſion of Nature, Death hath this Name engraven in its forehead, *Ultimum terribilium*, the ſupreme of terrible things, upon ſeveral accounts.

Be-

1. Becauſe uſually ſickneſs and pains languiſhing or tormenting, make the firſt changes in the Body, and the natural Death is violent. This *Hezekiah* complained of with a mournful accent, *He will cut me off with pining ſickneſs: from day even to night thou wilt make an end of me. I reckoned till morning, that as a Lion, ſo will he break all my Bones.* A Troop of Diſeaſes are the forerunners of this *King of Terrors.* There is a preceding encounter, and ſometimes very fierce, that Nature feels the cruel Victory before it yields to this Enemy. As a Ship that is loſt by a mighty tempeſt, and by the concuſſion of the Winds and Waves loſes its Rudder and Maſts, takes in water in every part, and gradually ſinks into the Ocean: So in the ſhipwrack of Nature, the Body *Iſa.* 38.

is ſo ſhaken and weakened by the violence of a Diſeaſe, that the ſenſes, the animal and vital Operations decline, and at laſt are exſtinguiſh'd in death.

2. Death conſidered in the ſtricteſt propriety, as deſtructive of the natural being, that is our firſt and moſt valuable good in the order of Nature, is the juſt object of Fear. The union between Soul and Body is very intimate and dear, and like *David* and *Jonathan* they part unwillingly. Nature has a ſhare in the beſt Men, and works as Nature: *St. Paul* declares, *we would not be uncloathed*, not finally put off the Body, but have it glorified in conjunction with the Soul. Our bleſſed Saviour, without the leaſt impeachment of the Rectitude and perfection of his Nature, expreſt an averſneſs from Death,

and

and with ſubmiſſion to the divine Will deſired a freedom from it. His Affections were holy and humane, and moved according to the quality of their Objects.

3. The natural conſequents of Death render it fearful. Life is the foundation of all natural enjoyments, and the loſs of it induces the loſs of all for ever. 'Tis from hence that ſuch Evils that are conſiſtent with Life, and deprive us only of ſome particular content and pleaſure, are willingly choſen rather than Death. The forfeiture of Eſtate, the degrading from honour, the confinement to a perpetual Priſon, the baniſhing from our native *Country*, are leſs Penalties than Death.

There is a natural love of Society in Man, and Death removes from all. The Grave is a frightful ſolitude. There is

no

no converſation in the territories of darkneſs. This alſo *Hezekiah* in his apprehenſions of death ſpeaks of with tears. *I ſhall ſee Man no more in the Land of the Living.* As in the Night, the World is an univerſal Grave, all things are in a dead ſilence; Palaces, Courts of Juſtice, Temples, Theaters, Schools, and all places of publick Converſation are ſhut up: the noiſe and rumour that keeps Men in continual obſervation and action ceaſes. Thus when the Sun of this preſent Life is ſet, all the Affairs and Buſineſs, all the vain joys of Company, Feaſting, Dancing, Muſick, Gaming, ceaſes. Every one among the Dead is confined to his ſealed obſcure Cell, and is alone an entertainment for the Worms.

Iſa. 38. 11.

Dies moritur in noctem, & tenebris uſquequaque ſepelitur; funeſtatur mundi honor, omnis ſubſtantia denigratur, ſordent, ſilent, ſtupent cuncta: ubique juſtitium eſt. *Tertul.* de Reſurrec. Car.

The

The *Pſalmiſt* ſaith of Princes, *Their breath goeth forth, they return to the Earth, in that very day their thoughts*, their glorious compaſſing thoughts, *periſh*. This the Hiſtorian obſerves was verified in *Julius Cæſar*: After his aſſuming the Imperial Dignity, he thought to reduce the numerous Laws of the *Romans* into a few Volumes, compriſing the ſubſtance and reaſon of all; to enrich and adorn the City of *Rome*, as was becoming the Regent of the World: to epitomiſe the Works of the moſt learned *Grecians* and *Romans* for the publick Benefit. And whilſt he was deſigning and purſuing theſe, and other vaſt and noble things, Death ſurpriſed him, and broke off all his Enterpriſes.

Talia agentem atque meditantem mors prævenit. *Sueton.*

At the terrible Gate that opens into Eternity, Men are ſtript of all

all their Honours and Treaſures, *and as naked as they come into the World, go out of it. Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his Houſe is encreaſed. For when he dieth, he ſhall carry nothing away; his glory ſhall not deſcend after him.* Death equally vilifies, makes loathſom and ghaſtly the Bodies of Men, and reduces them to ſordid Duſt. In the Grave the * duſt is as precious and powerful of one as of another. Civil diſtinctions are limited to the preſent time. The prodigious Statue in *Nebuchadnezzar's* Viſion, *Dan.* 2. 32, 33, 34, 35. while it was upright, the parts were really and viſibly diſtinct: *The head was of fine gold, the breaſt and arms of ſilver, the belly and thighs of braſs; the*

Pſal. 49. 16, 17.

* As our Divine Poet expreſſes it.

The brags of Life are but a nine days wonder;
And after Death the fumes that ſpring,
From private Bodies make as big a thunder,
As thoſe that riſe from a huge King.
Herbert.

the legs of iron, the feet part of iron and part of clay: but when the ſtone cut out without hands, ſmote the Image upon the feet, then was the iron, the clay, the braſs, the ſilver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the Chaff the wind carries away. Who can diſtinguiſh between Royal Duſt taken out of magnificent Tombs, and Plebean Duſt from common Graves? Who can know who were Rich, and who were Poor; who had power and command, who were Vaſſals, who were remarkable by Fame, who by Infamy? *They ſhall not ſay this is Jezebel:* not know this was the Daughter and Wife of a King. The King of *Babylon*, ſtiled *Lucifer* the bright Star of the Morning, that poſſeſt the firſt Empire in the World, was degraded by *Death*, humbled to the Grave, and exchanged all his glorious

2 *Kings* 9. 37.

glorious State for Worms and
Isa. 14. 11. Putrefaction. *The Worm is ſpread under thee, and the Worms cover thee.* In ſhort, *Death* ſeparates Men from all their admired charming Vanities.

2. *Death* is fearful in the apprehenſion of Conſcience, as 'tis the moſt ſenſible mark of God's Wrath, that is heavier than *Death*, and a ſummons to give an account of all things done in this Life, to the righteous Judg of
Heb. 9. 27. the World. *'Tis appointed to all Men once to die, and afterward the Judgment.* The Penal Fear is more wounding to the Spirit, than the Natural. When the awakened Sinner quietly expects the Citation to appear before the Tribunal above, where no excuſes, no ſupplications, no privileges avail, where his cauſe of Eternal Life or Death muſt be decided,

decided, and the awards of Juſtice be immediately executed; O the Convulſions and Agonies of Conſcience in that hour! when the diſeaſed Body cannot live, and the diſconſolate Soul dare not die, what Anxieties ſurround it? This redoubles the terrors of *Death*, that the firſt tranſmits to the ſecond that was figured by it. O the diſmal aſpect of *Death riding on a pale Horſe, with Hell the black Attendant following. This Fear ſurpriſed the Sinners in Sion; Who among us can dwell with devouring Fire? who among us can remain with everlaſting burnings?* This made a Heathen, the Governor of a Province, to tremble before a poor Priſoner. *While* Paul *diſcourſed of Righteouſneſs, Temperance, and Judgment to come,* Fœlix *trembled.* *Acts* 24. 25. *'Tis a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living* *Heb.* 10. 31.

God, who lives for ever, and can puniſh for ever. None is ſo powerful as God, nothing ſo fearful as the guilty Conſcience.

3. The degrees of this Fear is expreſt by Bondage. This Paſſion when regular in its Object and Degree is excellently uſeful: 'tis a wiſe Counſellor and faithful Guardian, that plucks off the Mask from our Enemies, and keeps Reaſon vigilant and active to prevent a threatning Evil, or to ſuſtain it in the beſt manner. 'Tis obſervable in the brute Creatures, that the weak and fearful, are moſt ſubtile and ingenious to ſecure themſelves, and ſupply the want of ſtrength with artifice. But when Fear is inordinate, 'tis a tyrannous Maſter, that vexes the weary Soul, and hinders its free and noble Operations. *Cæſar* choſe rather to be expos'd

to ſuddain death, than to be continually harraſt with fears how to avoid it. The Greek word implies the binding of the Spirit, that cauſes an inward ſlavery. And in the Apoſtles Writings, ‖ *the Spirit of Fear, and the Spirit of Bondage*, are equivalent. *Iſhboſheth*, when *Abner* provok'd by the Charge about *Saul*'s Concubine, imperiouſly threatned to tranſlate the Kingdom to *David*, was ſtruck *with ſuch a fear, that he could not anſwer* Abner *a word*, 2 Sam. 3. 10, 11. The ſuddain paſſion ſtifled his replie, and reduc'd him to a defenceleſs ſilence. Now the fear of Death, as 'tis remiſs or vehement, ſuch are the degrees of bondage from it.

Præſtat ſemel mori quam ſemper timere.

Δεὸς from δέω.

‖ πνεῦμα δουλείας. Rom. 8. 15. πνεῦμα δειλείας. 2 Tim. 1. 7.

1. It embitters the enjoyments of the preſent Life, and makes the moſt proſperous in the World, *even in the fulneſs of their*

ſufficiency to be in ſtraits. Tho' the ſenſes are pleaſed with the quick ſweetneſs of Change from one Object to another, yet the Soul cannot have a delightful undiſturbed fruition, foreſeeing that the ſtream of Pleaſure will iſſue into the dead Sea. *Truly Light is ſweet, and 'tis a pleaſant thing to behold the Sun.* But how ſhort is this Life with all its pleaſures, in compariſon of *the days of darkneſs* that follow. Now tho' 'tis our beſt wiſdom and trueſt liberty, to rejoice *in this World, as if we rejoiced not*, and frequently to meditate on the cooling Doctrines of *Death* and *Judgment*, to repreſs the tranſports of the voluptuous appetite; yet ſince the Comforts of this Life are liberally indulged to us by the Love of God, to be the motives of our grateful and affectionate Obedience, to ſweeten

Eccleſ. 11.7.

ſweeten our paſſage to Heaven, we may with tranquillity of Spirit make a pure and chearful uſe of them in his ſervice; and 'tis an oppreſſing bondage, when the diſquieting anxious fears of *Death* hinders our temperate enjoyment of his Favours and Bleſſings.

2. The fear of *Death* oppreſſes the Souls of Men under a miſerable Bondage to the Devil; for his Dominion is maintain'd by the Allurements and Terrors of the World. Tho Men do not explicitly acknowledg his Soveraignty, yet by voluntary yielding to his pleaſing temptations, they are really his Slaves. And the apprehenſion of temporal Evils, eſpecially of *Death*, dreſt up in a frightful repreſentation, with its bloody pomp, is the ſtrongeſt ſnare to the Soul. The faint-hearted prove falſe-hearted in the time of *Prov.* 29.

trial: For the timerous Spirit being wholly intent how to avoid the incurſion of a preſent Evil, forgets or neglects what is indiſpenſibly to be done, and thinks to find an excuſe in the pretended neceſſity. How many have been terrified from their cleareſt Duty, and reſolved Conſtancy? To eſcape Death, they have been guilty of the moſt inſufferable impieties, by renouncing God their Maker and Saviour, and worſhipping the Devils for Deities. Every Age preſents ſad ſpectacles of many *that chuſe iniquity rather than affliction*, that relinquiſh their duty, and by wicked compliances ſave their Lives and loſe their Souls. Carnal Deſires, and Carnal Fears, are the Chains of Hell that retain Men Satan's Captives. But what folly, what madneſs is it, for the avoiding

Job 36.21.

the

the impotent fury of the Creature, to venture on the powerful wrath of God, that exceeds all the terrors that can be conceived by *fear*. This renders them more bruitish than the Horse, that starting at his Shadow, springs over a desperate Precipice. *The fearful are excluded from Heaven, and cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone for ever.* Rev. 21.

3. The extream fear of *Death* and *Judgment*, dejects and discourages the Soul from the use of means to prevent eternal misery, and induces a most woful Bondage. Fear anticipates and exasperates future Evils: for as knowledg excites fear, so fear encreases knowledg, by the uncessant working of the thoughts upon terrible Objects. The fearful mind aggravates the foreseen Evil, and distils the Poison from all the circumstances and conse-

quences of it. And when the Evil is apprehended as inſuperable and indeclinable, all endeavours to eſcape are cut off. What a Philoſopher obſerves of an Earthquake, compared with other deſtructive Evils, is true in this caſe. There may be a ſafe retreat from Fire, from Inundations, from Storms, from War, from Peſtilence, but an Earthquake aſtoniſhes with ſo violent a perturbation, that ſtops our flight from the imminent danger. So the vehement impreſſions of fear from the approaches of death, and the ſevere executions upon the Sinner after it, diſtracts the mind, and diſables from *flying from the Wrath to come.* Theſe Fears are more heavy by the ſuggeſtions of Satan, who repreſents God ſo terrible in his Majeſty, inexorable in his Juſtice, and dread-

Senec. Nullum malum ſine effugio.

Timor fugam perdidit.

dreadful to Death, that all hopes of obtaining his favour are loſt. As the *Egyptian Darkneſs* was not meerly from the abſence of the Sun, but from feculent Vapours condenſing the Air, that it might be felt. So theſe dark and fearful expectations of the Divine Wrath, are not only from the withdrawing the Light of God's Countenance, but from the Prince of Darkneſs that foul Spirit. And as we read of the *Egyptians*, that *no Man aroſe from his place for three days*, as if they had been buried in that darkneſs, and deprived of all active power and motion: ſo the deſpairing Soul ſits down mourning at the Gates of Death, totally diſabled from proſecuting the Things *that belong to its peace.* 'Tis Hope inſpires and warms us with alacrity, encourages our Endeavours, De-

ſpair

ſpair is without edg and induſtry. The Soul ſuffers the hardeſt Bondage, and the condition is inexpreſſibly ſad under the tyranny of this Fear. O how enthralled, how deſolately miſerable! for deſpair doth meritorioufly and effectually ruin the Soul. For whereas there is no Attribute more Divine, no clearer Notion of the Deity than Love and Mercy; this Paſſion diſparages his Mercy, as if Sin were more omnipotent, than his Power to pardon; and all the Tears that flow from it, are ſo far from expiating, that they encreaſe Guilt: and whereas the believing view of Chriſt would as compleatly and preſently recover the Soul-wounded Sinner, as the *Iſraelites* were by looking to the ordained viſible Sign of their Salvation; Deſpair turns away the Eye from

our

our Deliverer, and fixes it upon miſery as remedileſs and final.

4. How comes it to paſs that Men are not always under the actual fear of Death, but ſubject to the revolutions of it all their Lives.

The Seeds of this Fear, are hid in the guilty Breaſts of Men, and at times, eſpecially in their Calamities, break forth and kindle upon them. In their leiſure and Retirement, intercurrent thoughts of *Death* and *Judgment* ſting them by fits, and make them uneaſy. The flaſhes of Conſcience, like moments of Lightning, ſtartle them, but they relapſe into their habitual ſtupidity. And the account of it will be clear, by conſidering the following Particulars.

1. Men are apt to flatter themſelves with the hopes of long Life, and look upon Death at a great

great distance. Tho' there be a dying disposition in the youngest and strongest Persons, tho' we live in a world of Casualties, and Death lie in ambush to surprize us every day, yet we are secure: because Evils affect us according to their apprehended nearness. A Petty Constable that is troublesom and vexatious, is more fear'd by his Neighbours, than the Grand Signior with all his Executioners. As remote Objects, though of vast bigness, are lessen'd to our sight, so through the supposed interval of many years, *Death* is lookt on with a diminution of its Terror. But when Death presents it self before Men ready to dispatch them, how formidable is its appearance! *Saul* tho renouned for his Valour, yet when he understood by Revelation, that to morrow he and

his

his Sons ſhould be in the ſtate of the dead, *there was no ſtrength in him, but he fell ſtraight-way all along on the Earth*; ſtruck through with fear before he was wounded by the Arrows of the *Philiſtins*. *Belſhazzar* in the midſt of his luxury and jolity, attended with a *thouſand Lords*, and his *herd of Concubines*, inflam'd with Wine, and therefore leſs capable of fear, yet upon the ſight of the fatal Hand writing on the Wall a few unknown Characters, which his guilty Conſcience (before the Prophet *Daniel* came) interpreted to be the ſentence of preſent Death, How fearfully was his Countenance changed pale as a Carcaſs? How ſuddainly did his Blood congeal, and his warmeſt quickeſt Spirits die in his Heart? His whole Body was ſeized by ſuch a vehement trembling, that his joints were looſed,

1 *Sam.* 28.

Dan. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4.

looſed, and his knees ſmote one againſt another. This is a repreſentation of thoſe who bid defiance to Death at a diſtance; but when the fatal Hour is come, and they hear the Sentence decreed againſt them, *God has numbred thy days, and finiſh'd them: thou art weighed in the ballance* (all thy words and Actions, thy Thoughts and Affections) *and art found wanting*: and thy Soul ſhall *be divided* from thy Body, the one ſent to Hell to ſuffer the undying Worm of Conſcience, the other to the Grave, to be a prey to the Worms of Corruption; how are they overcome with horror!

2. The continual ſucceſſion of the Pleaſures and Buſineſs of the World divert the mind from the attentive ſtrong contemplation of Death, and the conſequences of it. Penſive thoughts are unwelcome

welcome, and we ſtudiouſly endeavour to cancel the memory of ſuch things as afflict us. 'Tis ſaid of the Wicked, that *God is not in all their thoughts*: The conſideration of the Holy Inſpector and Judg of their Actions is tormenting, therefore they fill their minds with earthly Imaginations, to exclude the Divine Preſence. We read of thoſe, who to *put far away the evil day, chaunted to the ſound of the Viol, and drank Wine in Bowls.* They are rock'd aſleep with the motion of phantaſtick Vanities. And ſleep takes away Fear, but gives no ſafety. 'Tis recorded of *Marius*, that after his overthrow by *Scylla*, he was always in conſternation, as if he heard the ſound of the Trumpets, and the noiſe of the victorious Army purſuing him: And his Fears were no longer quiet

Amos 6.3,4.

Ælian.

quiet than whilſt charm'd with Wine and Sleep. He therefore was continually drunk, that he might forget Himſelf, his Enemy, and his Danger. Thus Men make a pittiful ſhift to forget their latter End: and whilſt they are following either ſecular Affairs, or ſenſual Pleaſures, are unconcerned for what is to be hereafter. But this diverſion will ſhortly be at an end, for in their languiſhing hours, when the waſted Body fails the carnal Mind, and ſenſual Deſires fail the Man, then Conſcience that ſpoke with a low Voice before, is loud and terrible, and like the rigid Exactor in the Parable, that took his Debtor by the throat, requires them to pay what they owe.

3. Some are ſo hardned in Infidelity, that the Powers of the World to come make no impreſ-

ſion

ſion on their hearts. They mind but little, and are leſs affected with inviſible things. They fortify themſelves with groſs thoughts, that the Spirit of Man vaniſhes with his Breath, that Death is the end of this Life, and not the beginning of another, *and feed without fear.* Place one in the midſt of deſtructive Evils, but unſeen or not believed, and he is as fearleſs as a blind Perſon walking on the brink of a deep Pit. Indeed there are none leſs diſturbed with the terrors of Death, than the eminently good, or the extremely bad: for the one ſort have a *bleſſed hope* that Death will be to them an entrance into Life, and live like the Angels, *with a joy unſpeakable and glorious.* The others are as ſenſual and ſecure as the Beaſts that periſh, having extin-

guiſh'd the fear of eternal future Evils, which is the proper paſſion of reaſon. The Apoſtle declares,

2 Cor. 5. 11. *That knowing the terror of the Lord, we perſwade Men to be reconciled to him, before the ſeaſon of Mercy be expir'd.* But thoſe who have ſuppreſt the natural Notions of Eternal Judgment, as they think it beneath their wiſdom to be perſwaded by the Promiſes of Heaven, ſo beneath their courage to be terrified with the threatnings of Hell, and triumph over the ruins of Conſcience. But tho' wicked Infidels ſlite the Threatnings, they ſhall not eſcape the Vengeance of God.

Heb. 11. *We read of* Noah, *that being warned of God of things not ſeen as yet, moved with fear, he prepared an Ark for the ſaving of his Houſe.* His Fear was the native iſſue of his Faith. But the profane World,

World, in whom ſence was predominant, that deſpiſed the Oracle, and trembled at no Judgments but what were acting on the viſible Stage, *they eat and drank, married, and were given in marriage*, till ſwept away by the unfeared Inundation. We read that *Lot* being certified by an embaſſy of Angels, that a Deluge of Fire would in a few hours pour down from Heaven upon *Sodom*, he moſt earneſtly ſolicited his Sons-in-Law, *Ariſe, depart out of this place, for the Lord will deſtroy this City*: but they entertained his compaſſionate advice with deriſion, *he ſeemed to them as one that mocked*, and were ſurpriſed by thoſe fearful Flames that diſpatch'd them from a temporal Hell to that which is Eternal. Thus 'twas propheſied, *That in the laſt days there ſhall come*

Scoffers, walking after their own luſts, and ſaying, Where is the Promiſe of his coming? But let them blaſpheme and ſcorn the moſt ſacred and terrible Truths, let them perpetuate their *exceſs of riot*, and wild Mirth while they live, Death will come, and Judgment as ſure as Death.

III. I now come to ſhew how the Death of Chriſt frees us from the tormenting fear of Death.

For the clearing this, we are to conſider, that Sin, Satan, and Death, are Enemies in combination againſt Man in his mortal ſtate; and the deſtructive Power of Satan, and Death, is from Sin. When Man renounc'd his Creatour and natural Lord, he was judicially given up to Satan as the Executioner of Vengeance, and to the Power of Death. Such

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is the order, rather the confuſion in the World by Sin. The Empire of Satan and Death is built on the Ruins of our Innocence.

Now the Son of God came from his Throne in Heaven to deliver us: And whereas there are two ways of obtaining freedom from captivity, either by Ranſom, or by Power and Reſcue, in both reſpects our deliverance from Bondage, to theſe Capital Enemies, is aſcribed to the Death of Chriſt.

'Tis called our Ranſom, and that in its ſtrict Notion has a reſpect to Captivity. *There is one God, and one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Chriſt Jeſus: who gave himſelf a Ranſom for all.* 1 *Tim.* 2. 6. His Life was the full price of our Liberty and Salvation. God does not pardon ſin, and releaſe from puniſhment by a pure abſolute

ſolute act of his Will and Authority, as a Creditor forgives a Debtor; but in ſuch a way as to preſerve the Rights of Juſtice inviolate. Therefore when Man was devoted to Death, our Redeemer exchang'd conditions with him,
1 *Pet.* 1. 18. and offer'd *up his precious Blood*, as our Ranſom to God, in the quality of the King and Judg of all. Such was the dignity of his Perſon, that the entire World, the Heavens and the Earth with all their Inhabitants, are of leſs value to him, than the baſeſt Droſs to refined Gold. Such was the greatneſs of his Sufferings, in
Phil. 2. 8. which the higheſt degree of Obedience, and the loweſt degree of Humility were conſpicuous, as to be a valuable Compenſation, to obtain *eternal Redemption for us.*

Now

Now when God the ſupreme Judg is ſatisfied, Satan forfeits the right he had to torment us, and is deveſted of his dominion over our Wills; which tho' juſtly permitted, was an uſurpation upon God's Right in Man that can never be extinguiſh'd. 'Tis ſaid by the Apoſtle, that our Saviour *blotting out the hand-writing of Ordinances that was againſt us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Croſs*: He aboliſh'd the uſe of the Ceremonial Law, that was an Evidence and Enditement of their Guilt who performed it, and the Curſe of the Moral Law: it follows, *and having ſpoiled Principalities and Powers, he made a ſhew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.* Our Saviour died victoriouſly; the Tree of Infamy on which he ſuffered, was the Trophy of his Con-

Col. 2.

Conqueſt. His Death diſarm'd Satan of his Weaponswhere by he ſubdued us, *Sin*, the *Law*, and *Death*; for tho' his actual Triumph was in his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion to Glory, yet it is juſtly aſcribed to his Death: for that meritoriouſly open'd the Grave at his Reſurrection, and Heaven at his Aſcenſion.

And here by the way 'tis moſt worthy of obſervation, that our deliverance from our ſpiritual and moſt deadly Enemies is equally righteous, as admirable and glorious: for our ſuffering Saviour appeas'd the Wrath of God, and broke the Powers of Darkneſs. *The Wiſdom and Love of God had their deſigns in his Death, as well as the malice and rage of Satan, as Lines, that are oppoſite in the circumference, meet in the Centre.*

And

And as from the Tyranny of Satan, ſo the Death of our Redeemer is our redemption from Death, as to the curſe and final dominion of it; nay, has made it a bleſſed advantage to us.

1. The Curſe is removed. Death conſidered as the Wages of Sin, is all ſting and poiſon, the conſequent of the ſpiritual *Death*, and the introduction to eternal *Death*. *The ſting of Death is Sin, and the ſtrength of Sin is the Law.* 1 *Cor.* 15. Death hath its wounding Power from Sin, and Sin from the Law, that forbids it, that diſcovers its Nature, and enhanſes the meaſure of its Guilt, and denounces condemnation for it. Now our Saviour having in our ſtead, ſubjected himſelf to Death, the penalty of the Law for Sin, *There is no condemnation to thoſe that are in Chriſt Jeſus. Chriſt hath redeemed* *Gal.* 3.

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us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us. Death inflicted on the Saints, has not that relation to the guilt of Sin, as to be properly satisfaction to revenging Justice. There are no petty payments to be made by our Sufferings after his compleat satisfaction to God. *The Lord laid on him the Iniquities of us all.* Isa. 53.

'Tis indeed still a declaration of God's holy displeasure against Sin, for that originally open'd the way of its coming into the World; and sometimes by the immaturity or manner of it, 'tis a chastisment upon good Men for sin; that is, to make them renew their Repentance, and mortify their carnal Affections that fasten them to the World. For tho' after the last act of expiration there is no place for Repentance; yet in the approaches of

Death,

Death, the Soul is ſtrongly excited by the Call of God to review its ſtate, and make ſolemn preparation to be *found of him in Peace*. But 'tis not in a ſtrict ſence the malediction of the Law, and divine Revenge upon them. The Serpent is turn'd into a Rod of Correction in the hands of our Heavenly Father for their good. As the Apoſtle, ſpeaking of ſome that for their profaning the Lord's Table, were *fallen aſleep*, adds, *that when we are judg'd, we are chaſtened of the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the World.* *A Believer ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond Death.* *Heb.* 12. 1 *Cor.* 10. 33. *Rev.* 2.

From hence it is, that in the Book of Life, the Scriptures, the death of the Saints is called *a ſleep*. *St. Paul* argues, *If we believed that Jeſus died and roſe again; even ſo them alſo that ſleep* 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 14

ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him. 'Tis obſervable how the Apoſtle varies the expreſſion, *Jeſus died,* and *the Saints ſleep in him*: for he ſuſtained death with all its terrors, that it might be a calm ſleep to his People. They enjoy as perfect a reſt in the Beds of Duſt, as ever in the ſofteſt Down. *Stephen* in the midſt of a ſhowr of ſtones fell aſleep. Believers die in peace. *The Righteous is taken from the Evil to come: he enters into peace.* Being reconciled to God through the Blood of Chriſt, they are not terrified at his Call, but with ſweet tranquillity reſign their Souls unto him. *Lord, now let thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.*

Annon longe glorioſius fuit, quandoquidem totum pro nobis agebatur, ut non modo paſſio corporis, ſed etiam cordis affectio pro nobis faceret? Et quos vivificabat mors, nihilominus & trepidatio robuſtos, & mæſtitia lætos & tædium alacres & turbatio quietos facecet, & deſolatio conſolatos? *Bern.* Serm. 1. de St. *Andr.*

Iſa. 57. 1, 2.

Luk. 2.

There

There is a vaſt difference in God's account, between the Death of Righteous and the Wicked. As the Tabernacle in the Wilderneſs was taken down with care upon their change of ſtation, and delivered to the *Levites* Charge, in order to the raiſing of it again with honour; but the Houſe incurably infected, was pluck'd down with violence, and thrown into an unclean place with execration: thus *the death of the Saints is precious in the ſight of the Lord*, their Bodies are kept in the boſom of the Earth, to be raiſed in Glory; and the death of the Wicked is accurſt. In ſhort, as the Wood that *Moſes* caſt into the Waters of *Mara*, by a miraculous virtue ſweetned them: ſo the Croſs of Chriſt has taken away the malignity and bitterneſs of Death.

2. *Death* is a bleſſed advantage, and

and *enriching Gain* to a Believer: it brings him to the poſſeſſion of that Good that incomparably exceeds the Evil that remains in it. For the Death of a Saint is not total; but as in the Ceremony of Purification from Leproſy, one Bird was killed, and the other let fly in the open Air, the myſterious ſhadow of the Lepers being reſtored to a ſtate of Liberty: thus *when the Body dies and returns to the Earth, the Spirit returns to God, the Father of Spirits, and Fountain of Life.* Our Saviour told the Jews, *I am the living Bread that*
John 6. 48. *came down from Heaven: if any Man eat of this Bread, he ſhall live for ever; and the Bread that I will give is my Fleſh, that I will give for the Life of the World.* The Heavenly Divine Life, that is communicated by the Spirit of Chriſt to Believers, remains entire when the

the ſenſitive life is loſt. The natural order is, *There is a time to be born, and a time to die*: the ſupernatural is, there is a time to die, and a time to be born. The death of a Saint is a || new Birth; the pains of the dying Body are as Throws, whereby the ripen'd Soul is delivered into *the Land of the Living*. The happineſs of a Saint after Death, more particularly will appear by conſidering;

|| Dies iſte quem tu tanquam ſupremum reformidas, æterni natalis eſt. *Senec.*

1. The place to which he aſcends the higheſt Heaven. This inferiour World is fram'd with exquiſite Order, *the Earth is full of the Glory of the Lord*; yet 'tis but the ſediment of the Creation, the habitation of Birds and Beaſts, nay of rebellious Sinners; and by this we may raiſe our thoughts to conceive ſomething of the ſeat of Life and Bleſſedneſs Above.

'Tis

'Tis for its amplitude and excellency called *the Heaven of Heavens*, which is the higheſt compariſon to inſtruct and aſtoniſh us with the Glory of the place. The ſhining Firmament, with all the Luminaries that adorn it, are but the Frontice-piece to it. All the luſtre of Diamonds, the fire of Carbuncles and Rubies, the brightneſs of Pearls are dead in compariſon of its Glory. 'Tis called by our Saviour *his Fathers Houſe*, and he *is the God of Glory*; 'tis *his Temple*, wherein his ſacred Preſence is fully exhibited: *His Throne*, wherein his Majeſty is revealed in the moſt illuſtrious manner.

For pleaſantneſs; 'tis called *Paradiſe*, in alluſion to the delicious Garden planted by the hands of God himſelf for *Adam*, his Favorite, whilſt innocent. There

is

is the *Tree of Life* indeed, and *Rivers of Pleaſure* ever ſpringing from the Divine Preſence. *'Tis the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*; Col. 9. to ſignify literally and allegorically the glory and joy of the Place. For Light gives ſplendor to things; and conciliates chearfulneſs, and is a fit Emblem of both. As on the contrary, Hell is deſcribed by *the blackneſs of darkneſs for ever*; to ſignify the ſadneſs and deſpair of the Damned, and becauſe in that centre of miſery, a perpetual night and invincible darkneſs increaſes the horror of loſt Souls.

Heaven for ſtability is called, *a City that has Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God.* The preſent World is like a Tent or Tabernacle ſet up for a time, and with all its periſhing Idols ſhall ſhortly fall; all this beautiful

Scene ſhall be diſſolved: But the ſupreme Heaven is *a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken.* Our Saviour tells us, *In my Father's Houſe are many Manſions*, to ſignify the amplitude and durableneſs of it.

2. In that bleſſed Place there is a freedom from all afflicting Evils, that are numberleſs here. The preſent World is a labyrinth of Thorns, in every ſtate we meet with ſomething to vex us. You may as well count the Waves of the Sea when inraged by a Tempeſt, as the troubles to which in this mortal open ſtate we are expos'd. *Man that is born of a Woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.* A ſhort life, and many miſeries. O our unhappy capacity! the Body is liable to as many Diſeaſes as there are Members; and the Soul to as many perplexities as paſſions. How often are the

Job 14. 1.

Tempus anguſtatur ad vitam, dilatatur ad miſeriam.

the ſcenes and habits chang'd in the time of one Man? He that lives in pleaſures, muſt act the Mourner's part. *Our ſweeteſt comforts have hidden ſtings*: and whatever is moſt pleaſing may occaſion bitter grief. And uſually holy Men have a greater portion of afflictions here: ſometimes by the malignity and violence of the wicked; as under the Law, the Lamb and the Dove were Sacrifices, the Emblems of Innocence, and Purity, and Meekneſs, whilſt the Vulture and the Lion the greedy devourers eſcap'd. This the Apoſtle declares of the Elect; *They are predeſtinated to be conform'd to the Image of God's Son*, who trac'd out the way to Heaven in his own Blood, and by the Croſs aſcended to the Throne. Sometimes more immediately Divine Providence afflicts them, to pre-

ſerve their Spirits from the tainted pleaſures of the World, and other Holy Ends: but there *is a reſt for the People of God in Heaven.* Beſides, there are Reliques of Sin in the beſt of the Saints here. Indeed Sin is depos'd from ſovereignty and rule; the imperious Luſts are crucified, but not quite expir'd. As thoſe that were nail'd to the Croſs in their hands and feet, the parts leaſt vital and moſt ſenſible, died a painful lingring death. *Still the fleſh luſts againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh.* As there is a complexion of Humours in humane Bodies, always jarring when they are in the ſoundeſt health; and where there is not this active contrariety, either the Body is without a Soul, a mere Carcaſs, or a glorified Body in Heaven. So where there is not this

this internal Combat between Grace and Sin, either the Man is wholly ‖ Carnal, *dead in ſins and treſpaſes*; or wholly ſpiritual reigning in Heaven. And there is nothing more works on the tender affections of a Saint, than to find in himſelf what is diſpleaſing to God; that ſtill he is under a ſad neceſſity of ſinning. What is ſaid concerning an old Man waſted and decayed in his drooping Years, that *the Graſhopper is a burden to him*; is true, of the new Man in a Chriſtian, the ſins that are counted light in the valuation of the World, are a heavy weight to him. Vain Thoughts, idle Words, irregular Paſſions, unprofitable Actions,

‖ Omnes homines aut ſunt penitus caro, & nihil habent ſpiritus, ii ſunt infideles ſine regeneratione. Aut ſunt tantum ſpiritus ſine carne. Ii ſunt ſancti; qui jam in Cœlo æterna fruuntur pace ſine pugna. Aut ſunt partim ſpiritus, partim caro. Ii ſunt omnes renati per ſpiritum ſanctum in Chriſto. *Aug.* cont. *Jul.*

are motives of heart-breaking ſorrow. Now Death is to a Believer a univerſal Remedy againſt all the Evils of this Life: it frees him from all Injuries and Sufferings, and from Sin in all its degrees, from all inclinations and temptations to it. *He that is dead, ceaſeth from Sin.* Death is the paſſage from this Wilderneſs to the true *Canaan* the reſt Above, that flows with better Milk and Hony, with Innocence and Happineſs for ever. There nothing can diſturb the Peace, or corrupt the purity of the bleſſed.

3. Beſides the privative advantage, the freedom from all the effects of God's diſpleaſure, and the reſentments of it, there is the higheſt poſitive Good obtained by Death; *The Spirits of juſt Men are made perfect in Heaven.* The Soul is the Glory of Man, and

and Grace is the Glory of the Soul, and both are then in their exaltation. All the Faculties of the Soul are rais'd to the higheſt degrees of Natural and Divine Perfection. In this Life Grace renews the Faculties, but does not elevate them to their higheſt pitch: it does not make a mean Underſtanding pregnant, nor a frail Memory ſtrong, nor a ſlow Tongue eloquent, but ſanctifies them as they are. But when the Soul is releas'd from this dark Body of Earth, the Underſtanding is clear and quick, the Memory firm, the Will and Affections ardent and vigorous. And they are enrich'd with divine Light, and Love, and Power, that makes them fit for the moſt noble and heavenly Operations. The lineaments of God's Image on the Soul are firſt drawn here, but

then it receives his laſt hand. All the Celeſtial Colours are added, to give the utmoſt life and luſtre to it. Here we are advancing, but by Death we arrive at Perfection.

We ſhall in Heaven be join'd to the Aſſembly of Saints and Angels, our beſt Friends. Love is the Law of that Kingdom, and Perfectly obeyed there. Now how charming is the Converſation of one that is wiſe and holy, eſpecially if the ſweetneſs of affability be in his temper? How pleaſantly does time ſlide away in the company of our beloved Friends? We are not ſenſible of its flight. But what dear ſatisfaction is it to be united to that choſen conſecrated Society Above, *who love one another as themſelves*. Tho' the Angels and Saints have different degrees of Glory,

yet

yet every one is perfectly happy and pleaſed. As the ſtrings of an Inſtrument differ in the ſize and ſound, ſome are ſharp and high, ſome grave and deep, others a mean, and from that variety reſults the Harmony and Muſick, ſo that if every ſtring had Judgment and Election, it would chuſe to be what it is: ſo from the different degrees of Glory in Heaven, the moſt amiable and equal Order of the Divine Wiſdom appears, that ſatisfies every one.

We ſhall be in the glorious preſence of God and Chriſt, *where is fulneſs of joy, and infinite pleaſures for ever.* 'Tis ſaid of *Abraham, He rejoic'd to ſee the day of Chriſt*, two thouſand Years before his coming. When by Faith he ſaw the incarnation of the Son of God, in order to the redemption

tion of Men, it put him into an extaſy. Yet then our Saviour was born to Sorrows and Miſeries. But how raviſhing is the ſight of our Redeemer, *ſet down on the right hand of the Majeſty on high, having purged our Sins by himſelf*, and accompliſh'd our Salvation. Now we are *abſent from God*, yet in believing his infallible Promiſes, we *rejoice with a Joy unſpeakable and glorious*; But how much more joyful is the fruition of them? Here the Divine Goodneſs is derived to us through ſecondary means, that weaken its efficacy, but in Heaven the conſolations of the Creator are moſt purely diſpenſed, and his immediate Excellencies are made known.

This Bleſſedneſs exceeds all our thoughts and explicit deſires, and requires the eloquence and experi-

experience of an Angel to ſet it forth. The bright ſum of it is this, We ſhall ſee God in his Glory, *face to face*, in the moſt perfect manner: the ſight of his Glory ſhall transform us into his Likeneſs; *we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is*: This ſhall produce in us the moſt pure and ardent Love; and Love ſhall be attended with inexpreſſible joy, and that with the higheſt praiſes of the bleſſed God, whoſe influxive preſence is the Heaven of Heaven.

1 *Cor.* 13.

1 *John* 3.

And that which crowns all is, that the Life above is Eternal. This ſatisfies all our Deſires, and excludes all our Fears: for unchangeableneſs is an inſeparable Attribute of perfect felicity. The Bleſſed are in full communion with God, *the Fountain of Life, and Chriſt the Prince of Life. Be-*

cauſe

cauſe I live, ſaith our Saviour, ye ſhall live alſo. What can interrupt, much leſs put an end to the happineſs of the Saints? The Love of God is immutably fix'd upon them, and their Love upon him. Here their love is ſubject to decays, and gradual alienations; as the Needle in the Compaſs, tho' it always has a tendency to the North Pole, yet ſometimes it declines and has its variations. But in Heaven the love of the Saints is directly and conſtantly ſet upon God. The *light of his Countenance* governs all their Affections. 'Tis as impoſſible to divert their deſires from him, as to cauſe one that is inflam'd with thirſt, to leave a clear flowing Spring for a noiſom Puddle. In ſhort, Heaven is filled with eternal *Halelujahs*: for there is no appearance of Sin, no ſhadow

of

of Death there: all miſeries are vaniſh'd, and all that is deſireable is poſſeſs'd by the Saints: the Circle of their Employment is to enjoy and praiſe the Divine Goodneſs for ever.

Now is not the bleſſed exchange a Chriſtian makes of the preſent Life, for that which is infinitely better, ſufficient to make Death not fearful, nay deſirable to him? And this Happineſs was purchas'd for us by the everlaſting Treaſure of our Saviour's Blood. The ſatisfaction of his Sufferings was meritorious, as the Merits of his active Obedience was ſatisfying.

Before I proceed to the third Head, I ſhall reſolve a Queſtion, How it comes to paſs, ſince Believers are freed from the ſting of Death,

Death, that they die, and remain in the ſtate of Death for a time.

For this there are ſeveral Reaſons.

1. By this means all the ſinful Frailties that cleave to the Saints in this Life, are aboliſh'd. *The Body is dead becauſe of Sin*: And what is more becoming the wiſe and holy Providence of God, than that as by Sin Man was at firſt made ſubject to Death, ſo by Death Sin dies entirely for ever. Thus as in *Sampſon*'s Riddle, Out of the Devourer comes Meat; and our worſt Enemy is conquer'd by his own Weapons.

Rom. 8.

2. Death is continued to the Saints, for the more eminent exerciſe and illuſtration of their Graces, for the Glory of God, and in order to their future

future reward. ‖ Faith, and Love, and Patience, are declared in their moſt powerful Operations in our encounter with Death. If every Saint were viſibly and entirely tranſlated to Heaven, after a ſhort courſe of holy Obedience; if the Wicked did viſibly drop down quick into Hell, Faith would be reſigned to ſight here. This would confound the Militant ſtate of the Church with the Triumphant. Therefore now *Death happens to the Good as well as to the Wicked.* In the next ſtate they ſhall be ſeparated *by a vaſt Gulph*, and an amazing Difference. Now Faith, what-ever the kind of Death be that a Chriſtian

‖ Poterat autem Chriſtus etiam hoc donare credentibus, ut nec iſtius experirentur corporis mortem: ſed ſi hoc feciſſet carni quædam fælicitas adderetur, minueretur fidei fortitudo. Quid enim magnum erat vivendo eos non mori qui crederent credere ſe non moriturum? Quanto eſt majus quanto fortius quanto laudabilius ita credere, ut ſe ſperet moriturus ſine fine victurum? *Aug.* de pecc. Mort. *Lib.* 2.

ſtian ſuffers, ſees through the thickeſt Clouds of Diſgrace and Miſery, the glorious Iſſue. As the illuſtrious Confeſſor who was crucified with our Saviour, proclaim'd his Eternal Kingdom in the midſt of inſulting Infidels. And our love to God then appears in its radiancy and vigour, when we are ready for the teſtimony of his Truth, and advancing his Glory, to ſuffer a violent Death: or when it comes in a gentler manner, for 'tis even then terrible to Nature, we are willingly ſubject to diſſolution, that we may be united to God in Heaven. And our patience has never its *perfect work*, and is truly victorious, till this laſt Enemy be ſubdued. *Death* is the *Seal* of our *Conſtancy* & *Perſeverance*. Now the Righteous Rewarder will crown none

none but thoſe *that ſtrive lawfully*, and are compleat Conquerors. And how wiſe and ſweet is the Oeconomy of the Divine Providence in this, that the frailty of our Nature ſhould afford us a means of glorifying God, and of entitling our ſelves by his moſt gracious Promiſes to a bleſſed Reward.

Exercitia nobis ſunt non funera, dant animo fortitudinis gloriam: Contemptu mortis præparant ad coronam. *Cypr.* de Mortal.

3. Our *Saviour* by his unvaluable Obedience and Sufferings, has procur'd for Believers a Celeſtial Divine Life, of which the natural Body is not capable. *The Apoſtle ſaith, Fleſh and Blood cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* The exigencies and decays of the ſenſitive Nature require a continual relief by food and ſleep, and other material ſupplies: but the Life above is wholly ſpiritual, and equal to that of the Angels. Therefore till this earthly ani-

mal Body be reformed and purified, 'tis not capable of the Glory reserv'd in Heaven. This is so absolutely requisite, that those Believers, who are found alive at the last Day, shall *in the twinckling of an Eye be changed*, that they may be qualified for it. Now herein the Wisdom of God is wonderful, that Death which by the Covenant of Works was the deserved penalty of Sin, by the Covenant of Grace should be the Instrument of Immortality. That as *Joseph* by a surprising Circuit was brought from the Prison to the Principality; so a Believer by the Grave ascends to Heaven. This the Apostle in his Divine Disputation against Infidels, proves in a most convincing manner; *Thou Fool, that which thou sowest, is not quickned except it die.* As the rotting of the Corn

in

in the Earth is neceſſary to the reviving and ſpringing of it up: ſo we muſt die, and the Image of the Earthly *Adam* be aboliſh'd, that we may be transformed into the Image of the Heavenly One.

And to the other part of the Queſtion, Why the Saints remain in the ſtate of Death for a time? there is a clear Anſwer. The Reſurrection of the Saints is delayed till Chriſt's coming to Judgment, partly for the Glory of his Appearance: For what an admirable ſight will it be, that the Saints of all Ages ſhall at once ariſe glorified and immortalized to attend upon our Saviour in the laſt act of his Regal Office, and then to make a triumphant entry with him into Heaven: And partly, that the eſtabliſh'd order of Providence

may not be disturbed: for the changing of our Nature into Glory, in a suddain and inexplicable manner, cannot be without miraculous Power; and if every Believer presently after Death, were in his glorified Body translated to Heaven, the World would be always filled with Miracles, which were to cease after the sufficient Confirmation of the Gospel by them. But how long soever the Interval be to the Resurrection, it shall be with *them that sleep in Jesus*, as 'tis with those that awake out of a quiet natural sleep, to whom the longest night seems but as a moment: so when the Saints first awake from Death, in the great Morning of the World, a thousand Years will seem no more to them than to God himself, *but as one day.*

I now come to prove the third Thing, That our Saviour will aboliſh the Dominion of Death over the Saints.

Whilſt the Bodies of the Saints remain in the Grave, they ſeem to be abſolutely under the power of Death. The World is a *Golgotha*, fill'd with the Monuments of its Victories. And it may be ſaid to this our laſt Enemy, in the words of the Prophet to the bloody King, *Haſt thou killed and taken poſſeſsion?* But we are aſſur'd by an infallible Word, that the power of Death ſhal be aboliſh'd, and the Bodies of the Saints be reviv'd incorruptible and immortal.

The Reſurrection is a *Terra incognita* to the wiſeſt Heathens; a Doctrine peculiar to the Goſpel: ſome glimmerings they had of

the Soul's Immortality, without which all Vertue had been extinguiſh'd in the World, but no conjecture of the reviving of the Body. But reaſon aſſiſts Faith in this point, both as to the Will of God, and his power for the performing it. I will glance upon the natural Reaſons that induce the conſidering Mind to receive this Doctrine, and more largely ſhew how *the Reſurrection of the Juſt is aſſured* by our Redeemer.

1. The Divine Laws are the Rule of Duty to the entire Man, and not to the Soul only: and they are obeyed or violated by the Soul and Body in conjunction. Therefore there muſt be a reſurrection of the Body, that the entire Perſon may be capable of Recompences in Judgment. The Soul deſigns, the Body executes: the Senſes are the open Ports to admit

admit Temptations. Carnal Affections deprave the Soul, corrupt the Mind, and miſlead it. The love of Sin is founded *in bono jucundo*, in ſenſible pleaſures: *and the Members are the Servants of Iniquity.* The Heart is the Fountain of Prophaneneſs, and the Tongue expreſſes it. And the Body is obſequious to the holy Soul in doing or ſuffering for God; and denies its ſenſual appetites and ſatisfactions in compliance with Reaſon and Grace. The *Members are the Inſtruments of Righteouſneſs.* It follows then there will be an univerſal Reſurrection, that the rewarding goodneſs of God may appear in making the Bodies of his Servants glorioufly happy with their Souls, and their Souls compleatly happy in union with their Bodies, to which they have a natural inclination, and his

revenging Juſtice be manifeſt in puniſhing the Bodies of the Wicked with eternal torments anſwerable to their guilt.

And of the poſſibility of the Reſurrection, the circular and continual production of things in the World, is a clear demonſtration of the Power of God for that effect. There is a pregnant Inſtance that our Saviour and the Apoſtle made uſe of as an Image of the Reſurrection: A grain of Corn ſowed in the Earth corrupts and dies, and after ſprings up entire: its death is a diſpoſition to life. The eſſays of God's Power in the Works of returning Nature, Flowers and Fruits in their ſeaſon, inſtruct us how eaſily he can make thoſe that are in the duſt to awake to life. If the Art of Man, whoſe power and skill are very narrow and limited, can re-

refine Gold and Silver to ſuch a luſter, as if their matter were not ‖ Earth digged out of the Mines: If from black Cinders it can form Chryſtal Glaſſes ſo clear and ſhining, how much more can Omnipotency recompact our duſt, and reanimate it with a glorious life? Death that diſſolves our vital frame, does not aboliſh the matter of our Bodies: and tho' 'tis corrupted and chang'd by a thouſand accidents, yet 'tis unperiſhing; and under whatſoever Colours and Figures it appears, God perfectly diſcerns and will ſeperate it for its proper uſe.

‖ *Nomen terræ in igni reliquit.* Tertul.

More particularly, I will ſhew how the Reſurrection of Chriſt is an aſſurance of the Reſurrection of Believers to Glory. As our Surety he was under the arreſt of Death; it becoming the holy Majeſty of God, and conducing to

to the ends of his Government, not to derogate from the dignity of his Law, but to lay the penalty upon his Son, who interpoſed for us. Now having finiſh'd the work of our Redemption by his ſufferings, his Reſurrection was the juſt conſequent of his Paſſion. And 'tis obſervable that his Reſurrection, tho one entire act, is
Rom. 1. 11. aſcribed as to himſelf, ſo to his Father, by whoſe conſent and concurrence he roſe again. Therefore 'tis ſaid, *Whom God raiſed up,*
Acts 2. 24. *having looſed the pains of Death: ſince it was impoſſible he ſhould be holden by it.* 'Twas naturally impoſſible upon the account of the Divine Power inherent in his Perſon, and legally impoſſible, becauſe divine Juſtice required that he ſhould be raiſed to Life; partly to vindicate his innocence, for he was reputed, and ſuffered as a Malefactor,

lefactor, and principally becauſe he had fully ſatisfied God. Accordingly the Apoſtle declares, *he died for our Sins, and roſe again for our Juſtification.* Having paid our Debt, he was releas'd from the Grave, and the Diſcharge was moſt ſolemnly publiſh'd to the World. 'Tis therefore ſaid, *the God of Peace raiſed him from the dead:* the act is moſt congruouſly aſcribed unto God, inveſted with that title, becauſe his Power was exerted in that glorious Work, after he was *reconciled by the Blood of the Covenant.* Briefly, Our Saviour's Victory over Death was obtained by dying, his Triumph by riſing again. He foil'd our common Enemy in his own territories the Grave. His Death was a Counter-poiſon to Death it ſelf: as a bruiſed Scorpion is a ‖ noble Antidote againſt its Venom.

Rom. 4.

Heb. 13.

‖ *Qui ſibi ipſe pulcherrimum medicamentum.* Celſus.

Indeed

Indeed his Death is incomparably a greater Wonder than his Reſurrection. For 'tis apparently more difficult that the Son of God, who originally poſſeſſes Immortality, ſhould die, than that the humane Body united to him, ſhould be raiſed to a glorious Life. It is more conceivable that God ſhould communicate to the humane Nature ſome of his Divine Perfections, Impoſſibility, and Immortality, than that he ſhould ſubmit to our loweſt Infirmities, Sufferings, and Death.

Now the Reſurrection of Chriſt is the argument and claim of our happy Reſurrection. For God choſe and appointed him to be the Example and Principle from whom all divine Bleſſings ſhould be derived to us. Accordingly he tells his Diſciples in a fore-cited Scripture, *becauſe I live, ye ſhall live*

live alſo. Our Nature was rais'd in his Perſon, and in our Nature all Believers: Therefore *He is called the firſt fruits of them that ſleep*; becauſe as the firſt Fruits were a pledge and aſſurance of the following Harveſt; and as from the condition of the firſt Fruits being offered to God, the whole Harveſt was entitled to a Conſecration; ſo our Saviour's Reſurrection to the Life of Glory is the earneſt and aſſurance of ours. He is called *the firſt-born among the Dead*, and owns the race of departed Believers as his Brethren, who ſhall be reſtored to Life according to his Pattern. He is *the head*, Believers *are his members*, and therefore ſhall have communion with him in his Life. The effect is ſo infallible that now they are ſaid *to be raiſed up together, and made to ſit in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.* Epheſ. 2. 6.

If

If his Victory over our Enemies had been imperfect, and he had ſaved himſelf with difficulty and hazard, [*as it were by Fire,*] in the Apoſtle's expreſſion, our Redemption had not been accompliſh't: But his Paſſion was triumphant, and is it conceivable that he ſhould leave the Saints, his own by ſo many dear titles, under the power of Death? If *Moſes* the Deliverer of *Iſrael* from the Ty-
Exod. 10. 26 ranny of *Pharaoh*, would not ſuffer any thing of theirs, *not an hoof* to remain in the Houſe of Bondage; will our great Redeemer be leſs perfect in his Work? Shall our laſt Enemy always detain his Spoils, our Bodies, in the Grave? This would reflect upon his Love and Power. 'Tis recorded, to confirm our hopes, how early his Power was diſplaid in forcing the Grave to releaſe its chained

Captives: *And many bodies of Saints which ſlept aroſe, and came out of the Graves after his Reſurrection, and went into the holy City, and appeared unto many.* What better Earneſt can we have that the ſtrength of Death is broken? From what he has done to what he is able to do, the Conſequence is clear. The Apoſtle tells us, *He will raiſe our vile bodies, and change them like unto his glorious Body, by that Power whereby he is able to ſubdue all things to himſelf.* Our Redemption *will then be compleat*, and all the bitterneſs of Death paſt. The Redemption of the Soul is accompliſh'd from Sin and Miſery immediatly after Death: but the Redemption of the Body is the laſt in order, and reſerved to crown our Felicity at the Great Day. Then *Death ſhall be ſwallowed up in Victory*, aboliſh'd for ever.

Matth. 27. 52, 53.

Phil. 3. 1.

Rom. 8. 23.

1 Cor. 15.

And

And O the joyful reunion of thoſe dear Relatives after ſuch a Divorce! when the Body that was ſo long detained in the loathſome Grave, ſhall be reformed with all glorious Perfections, and be a fit Inſtrument for the Soul, and partaker with it in Bleſſedneſs and a conſummate Immortality. 'Tis ſaid that *thoſe that wear rich Clothing are in Kings Houſes*: but what are all the Robes of coſtly Folly wherein earthly Courtiers appear, to the Brightneſs and Beauty of the Spiritual Body wherewith the Saints ſhall be clothed, to qualify them for the Preſence of the King of Kings, and to be in his Houſe for ever? But O the miſerable Condition of the Wicked in that day! Death now breaks their Bodies and Souls into an irreconcilable Enmity, and how ſad will their

1 Cor. 15.

Con-

Conjunction be! the Soul will accuſe the Body to have been Sins Solicitor, continually tempting to ſenſualities: and the body wil upbraid more than ever it allur'd the ſoul, for its wicked Compliance: Then the Sinner ſhall be an entire Sacrifice burning but never Mark 9. conſumed. Now from the aſſurance of a bleſſed Reſurrection by Chriſt, the forementioned fear of Death is conquered in Beleivers. If the Doctrine of the ‖ Tranſmigration of Souls into other Bodies (the invention of *Pythagoras*) inſpired his Diſciples with that fiery vigour, as to encounter the moſt preſent and apparent dangers, being fearleſs to part with the Life that ſhould be reſtored; how much more ſhould a Chriſtian with a holy confidence receive Death, knowing that the life of his Body ſhall

‖ *Felices erore ſuo quos ille timorum Maximus, haud urget leti metus, inde ruendi In ferrum mens prona viris, animæque capaces Mortis, & ignavum reditura parcere vitæ:* Lucan.

not be finally loſt, but renewed in a bleſſed Eternity?

The fourth General to be conſidered is, the Perſons that have an intereſt in this bleſſed *Priviledg*.

This inquiry is of infinite moment, both for the awakning of the ſecure, who vainly preſume upon their intereſt in the Salvation of the Goſpel, and for the confirming and encouraging the Saints. And we have an infallible rule of trial declared by St. *John*: *He that hath the Son, hath Life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not Life.* All the excellent and comfortable Benefits procur'd by our Saviour are communicated only to thoſe who are united to him. Particularly with reſpect to the preſent ſubject: Juſtification, that great bleſſing of the Goſpel, the compleat pardon of Sins, that diſarms Death of its

1 Joh. 5. 12.

ſting,

ſting, is not common to all that are Chriſtians in title, but is a priviledge with a limitation; *There is no Condemnation to thoſe that are in Chriſt Jeſus*, vitally as their Head from whom are derived ſpiritual influences, and judicially as their Advocate in Judgment; and ſuch are deſcribed by this infallible Character, *who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit*. The bleſſedneſs after Death that is aſſured by a Voice from Heaven, is with this preciſe reſtriction, excluſive of all others: *Bleſſed are the Dead that die in the Lord; they reſt from their labours, and their works follow them.* The glorious Reſurrection at the laſt Day, when the Bodies of the Saints that now reſt in Hope, ſhall be incorruptible and immortal, is the conſequence of union with him. Thus the Apoſtle declares; *As in Adam all die,*

Rom. 8. 1.

Revel.

1 Cor. 15. 22 *ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.* As all that were naturally in and from *Adam* the corupt fountain of Mankind, are under the ſentence of Death; ſo all that are in *Chriſt* the Head of the Regenerate, ſhall partake of his bleſſed Life. Others ſhall be raiſed by his Power, as their Judg, but not as their Head: rais'd to be more miſerable than Death can make them, not be transform'd into his glorious Reſemblance; made capable of ſuffering an ever-dying Death, not revived to eternal Life.

Now the bond of our union to Chriſt, is the holy Spirit derived from him, as the Head of the Church, and is the inward, powerful, and laſting principle of Holineſs, and new obedience in Be-
1 Cor. 6. 17. lievers. *He that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit*: that is, by the Spirit of Holineſs has a real participati-

on

on of his Life, is both *quickned and united to him.* When the Prophet *Eliſha* by the outward applying the parts of his Body to the dead Child, inſpir'd life into him, there was no real union between them: but Chriſt is by his Spirit ſo intimately united to Believers, *that he lives in them,* and *they in him.* The ſanctifying Spirit renews the directing and commanding faculties, the fountains of moral actions; enlightens the Underſtanding with ſaving Knowledge, rectifies the obliquity of the Will, purifies the Affections, and reforms the Life, ſo that *the ſame mind* is in Chriſtians *as was in Chriſt*; and as *his Converſation was*, ſuch *is theirs in the World.* This divine Change is not wrought by natural Reaſon, tho aſſiſted by the moſt powerful Arguments. The breath of a Man may as eaſily diſpel a Miſt, or

Joh. 6. 36.

2 Kin. 4. 34.

Gal. 2, 20.

thaw a Froſt, as humane directions and motives to Vertue can renew the Mind and Heart, and produce a holy frame of Soul towards God. Renewed Chriſtians are ſaid to *be in the Spirit*, illuminated, inclin'd and enabled by the Spirit to do God's Will; and the Spirit of God to dwell in them, by his peculiar and eminent operations. *They live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit.* An Angel may aſſume a Body, and act by it: but the humane Soul enlivens it, and performs ſenſible operations by it. And ſuch a principle is the holy Spirit to the Soul, gives it ſpiritual life, activity and power for good Works. By what application of the Spirit's power this is produc'd is myſterious and inexplicable: but as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of his rapture into the third Heavens, that he knew it was real, and

heard

heard *unutterable things*, tho how it was performed, *whether in the body, or out of the body*, he could not tell: thus when a natural man, the current of whoſe thoughts, and affections, was to the things of this World, becomes ſpiritual, when the carnal appetite is ſubdued, and ſanctified Reaſon has the Throne, when he feels ſuch ſtrong and ſweet impulſives to holineſs as engage the Will, when the ſtream of his deſires aſcend to the things above, and his Life becomes holy and heavenly, he feels and knows this wonderful change, tho the manner how it was wrought he cannot tell. I will ſhew more fully this ſanctifying work of the Spirit, that we may the better underſtand our ſtate.

The Spirit of God is denominated by various titles, *the Spirit*

Joh. 15. 26. Rom. 1. 4. *of Truth, the Spirit of Holineſs, the Comforter*, and repreſented by various types, by *an Ointment that clarifies the Eye to ſee things aright*, by *cleanſing refreſhing Water*, by *purifying refining Fire*, correſpondent to his ſacred operations in the Soul.

As the Spirit of Truth, he illuminates the Underſtanding to ſee the reality and excellency of ſupernatural and heavenly things, of the great Myſteries of Godlineſs, of Eternal Glory; ſo that a Chriſtian in his moſt deliberate, ſolemn and compoſed thoughts, in his exacteſt valuation infinitely prefers them before the gaudy Vanities of this tranſient World. When the Eyes of the Mind are truly enlightned, preſent things appear, or rather diſappear, as ſhadows.

As the Spirit of Holineſs he renews

news the Will and Affections, inſpires the Soul with divine and unutterable deſires after the Favour and Grace of God, and communicates ſpiritual Power for the proſecution and obtaining thoſe Deſires.

The holy Spirit raiſes ſuch a Love to God, that habitually and ſtrongly inclines the Soul to obey his Commands.

This is the moſt clear and eſſential Character of a Chriſtian, the ſpecial and moſt excellent Property of a Saint, upon which all other holy Qualifications depend. As Reaſon is the firſt and chief excellence of Man, from whence his other Perfections are derived, that diſtinguiſh him from the Brutes, and give him a natural and regular preheminence and dominion over them, ſo that a Man is moſt properly defined

a Reasonable Creature: Thus the Love of God is the most Divine Grace, the true Form of Holiness, the Root from whence all other Vertues spring and flourish, and most peculiarly distinguish a Saint from Unregenerate Men, however adorn'd and accomplish'd; so that a Saint is most properly defined to be a Lover of God.

This is the Principle of true Holiness inherent in the Soul, and shining in the Conversation, that distinguishes the Sincerity of a Saint from the Art of Hypocrisy, an affected appearance of Religion for carnal lordid respects: and from Civil Vertue, that restrains from what is ignominious and disgraceful to our Reputation, and makes obnoxious to penalties of the Laws, and excites to praiseworthy Actions, upon worldly motives: and from Philosophical,

cal Morality, that forbids Vice as contrary to Reaſon, and commends Vertue as the chief ornament and perfection of humane Nature, without a regard to pleaſe and glorify God.

And Divine Love is the Principle of Univerſal Holineſs. Love is called *the fulfilling of the Law*, as 'tis a comprehenſive Grace, & as it draws forth all the active powers of the Soul to do God's Will in an exact manner. Univerſal Obedience is the exerciſe of Love in various inſtances. As the Spouſe in the *Song* of *Solomon* is tranſform'd in divers Repreſentations; ſometimes as *a Siſter*, ſometimes as *a Warriour*, ſometimes as *the Keeper of a Vineyard*, but ſhe always acted as a Lover, and her cheif buſineſs was to pleaſe her Beloved. This Allegorical deſcription of the Church, ſignifies that

that when the Soul is inflamed with the love of God, that affection will be active and discover its self in all it does or suffers in the service of God. This will make a Christian very desirous and diligent to please God in all things, and careful not to displease him in any thing; for that is the inseparable effect of Love. The felicity of the natural temper, and the force of Education, may cause a loathing of some Evils, and dispose to some good Works, but with a reserved delight in other sins, and a secret exception against other duties. Servile fear is a partial principle, and causes an unequal respect to the Divine Precepts: it restrains from sins of greater guilt, at which Conscience takes fire: it urges to some duties, the neglect of which causes disquiet: but the Love of God

causes

cauſes the hatred of Sin, and therefore 'tis againſt all Sin, not only to prevent the exerciſe of it, but to eradicate it out of the ſoul. All the fearful conſequences of *Sin* do not render it ſo odious to a gracious *Spirit*, as its own proper *idea* and intrinſick evil, as 'tis contrary to the holy Nature and Law of God. Love unites the ſoul to God, and turns the thoughts continually to him: and the lively ſenſe of his Majeſty and Preſence, who is ſo pure that he cannot behold iniquity, cauſes an averſion from all that is diſpjeaſing to his Divine Eyes. And from hence it is that a zeaſous Lover of God is frequent and ſtrict in reviewing his heart and ways, and upon the diſcovery of ſinful failings, renews his repentance, which is the exerciſe of grief and Love, and renews his purpoſes of more care and

and circumſpection for the future. Love aſpires to be like God in all poſſible degrees of Purity: for it inflames our deſires after his Favour, as that which is better than Life, and all the ſweeteſt enjoyments of it, and Holineſs is the powerful attractive of God's delightful Love to us.

Love is the principle of free, ingenuous, and joyful Obedience. 'Twas our Saviour's Meat and Drink to do the Will of his Father. For Love is the fountain of Pleaſure, it moves the Soul with Election and Liberty, and makes every thing grateful that proceeds from it. Therefore the Apoſtle declares, *that the Law is not made for a righteous Man*: that is, as it is enforc'd by terrible penalties, to conſtrain rebellious ſinners to obedience: for Love is an internal living Law in the heart, and

has

has an Imperial Power over his Actions. And this alſo diſtinguiſhes the renovation of one ſanctified by the Spirit, from the imperfect change that is made in the unregenerate. They may ſtop the eruption of corrupt Nature, but *are like Swine that being waſh'd, have an inclination to wallow in the Mire*: they may by ſtrong impreſſions of Fear be urged to do many good things; but in this they are like a Boul that is thrown with ſuch violence, as controuls the drawing of the Bias, & makes it run contrary to it. But Love enclines the Soul to obey the holy motions of the Spirit with facility: as the Wheels in *Ezekiel's* Viſion *turned every way with readineſs as the Spirit mov'd them.*

And with holy Love there is a ſpiritual Power cõmunicated, that both the natural averſeneſs & impotence

potence to what is good for the healed. By the virtue of the sanctifying Spirit, the Soul that was dead, absolutely unable to perform spiritual and supernatural Acts, *is now vivified to a kind of Omnipotence, it can do all things* required by the Evangelical Covenant, by the new Law that is in the hands of our merciful Mediator for Salvation. 'Tis true, there are reliques of sin in the best, and the Flesh and Spirit are repugnant Principles warring against one another: but the holy Spirit will make no capitulation or composition with sin, but is for predominant that sin is gradually subdued, and does not so finally and frequently break forth, as it does from the unrenewed men by the accession of his strength *we are enabled to mortify the deeds of the Body, to crucify the flesh with the affections*

and luſt thereof: And to perform holy Duties, with freedom, alacrity and zeal, in ſuch a manner as is acceptable to God. In ſhort, ſaving Grace is diſtinguiſht from that which is common to the unregenerate, by its prevalency and conſtancy. There may be a declination in the Saints tending to a downfal; but *the Seed of God*, that ſupernatural Grace that *remains in them*, will by the power of the holy Spirit recover the ſupremacy. Others may be enlightned, and feel ſome good motions, and tranſient touches, as *Saul* had his rapture among the Prophets; but they are not truly, entirely, and perſeveringly converted to God. They are not proof againſt the allurements or terrors of the World. They make a fair profeſſion till they are try'd by temptations. Congealed drops of wa-

ter appear like solid Chrystal, till the warm beams of the Sun dissolve them, and discover the hypocrisie of the Chrystal. False Jewels may seem to have the luster of Diamonds, till they are broke by a fall, and discovered to be Glass. Thus the Riches, the Honours and Pleasures of the Flesh melt some, and temporal Evils break the resolutions of others, and make it evident they were not sincere Converts. But where the holy Spirit savingly works, *he is said to dwell*: he is not like a Passenger, or a Tenant at will, that neglects the House, and suffers it to fall into ruine, but as the Proprietary and Owner he keeps perpetual residence in true Christians; and by his continual influence preserves them from final Apostacy.

Now from hence we may judg

whe-

whether we have an interest in Christ and his Benefits. For the Apostle clearly tells us, *that if any Man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.* By this sacred Signature, we are appropriated to Christ, and visibly distinguish'd from the World. For tho the secret and pure influences of the Spirit in the soul are only known to the person that feels them, yet his active inspirations are declarative of his presence and power in the outward conversation. As the Wind that is of so thin and subtil a nature that 'tis invisible in it self, but we certainly know from what point it blows by the course and way that the Ship makes: thus the Spirit of God, who is compared to the Wind, is discovered by an infallible Indication, his fruits and effects in a holy Life. And those who have com- Rom. 8. 9.

munion with Christ by his Spirit, have a share in his Victories, and may with confidence meet the last enemy Death. For we are assured, *If the Spirit of him that*
Rom. 8. 11. *raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in us, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal Bodies, by the Spirit that dwelleth in us.*

A preparative conformity to Christ in Grace, will be followed with a consummating Glory. But those who never felt the sanctifying efficacy of the Spirit in their hearts and lives, tho they are Christians in profession, yet they have no other union with Christ, than a dead Branch with a Tree that receives no sap and virtue from it, or an artificial Member joyned to the Body, that may have the outward clothing and ornaments proper to that part, but derives no life and sense from it.

Who-

Whoever is in Christ is a new Creature. And only *those who partake in the first Resurrection from Sin, shall be exempted from the Power of the second Death,* and upon just grounds are freed from the terrors of the first. 2 Cor. 5. 17.

To apply this point, let us,

Consider our dear Obligations to our blessed Saviour, who to free us from the sting and enslaving fear of Death, submitted to it with all its terrors from God and wicked Men. He felt a sadness to an Agony in his Soul, and suffered the equal extreamities of Ignominy and Torment in his Body. The Favour of God was intercepted from him, that it might shine upon us in that gloomy hour. And all his terrible Sufferings, tho' foreknown by his enlightned mind, could not weaken his determined Will to under-

go them for us. But when Peter regarded with a more tender eye his Life than our Salvation, he was repell'd with indignation. Unparallel'd Love, no less than divine, transcending all the instances of humane affection. The highest kind and excess of Love amongst Men is to die for another, and the highest degree in that kind is to die to save an Enemy; and of this our Saviour is the singular Example. Love incomprehensible! *it passes knowledge, and all understanding* but his who expresst it. His Love was equal to the heighth of his Glory from whence he descended, and the depth of his sufferings that he sustained in our stead. *By washing*
Revel. 1. *us from our sins in his Blood, he makes us Kings*, dignifies us with spiritual Sovereignty over not only defiling, but disturbing passions.

The

The freest and most confident Sinner in the World, that rebels against the Divine Laws without restraint, is a slave not only under the chains of his imperious Lusts, but in that he is liable to the scourgings of Conscience when ever awaken'd, and to the servile fear of Death every day. But the sincere Christian has a clear and sweet peace, a blessed tranquillity from the tormenting apprehensions and fears of Death, that are the just consequents of guilt.

One of the ancient Romans highly celebrates the *Astronomers* who discover'd the true Causes of the Eclipses of the Sun and Moon, and freed the World from the double darkness of Ignorance and Fear, which believed the obscuring of those great Lights were the fainting fits of Nature, and mortal symptoms threatning an

Macti ingenio este Cœli interpretes, rerumq; naturæ capaces, Argumenti repertores, quo Deos hominesq; vinxistis. Plin. lib. 2.

universal Calamity. But what Praise and Blessing is due to our Saviour, who hath given us infallible assurance that the death of the Righteous is not as the heathen World imagin'd, an irreparable loss of Life, but a short eclipsing of this low and mean Light that is common to sensitive creatures, to be restored more excellent and permanent in Heaven; where those Stars shine in the Divine Presence for ever. *Thanks be to God which gives us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.* This should render him *infinitely precious to us*, and inflame our Hearts with desires equal to our Obligations to serve him.

2. Let us make it the main business of our lives to remove from our Souls the just fears of Death. 'Tis one of the solemn follies of the World to fear where there is no

no cause. As if a Sentinel should mistake Glowworms in the Night for lighted Matches, and give a false Alarm: but 'tis a worse folly, tho pleasing, not to fear when there is the greatest reason to excite it. And 'tis so in the present Case: for the most are without the fear of Death, that should make them serious in preparing for it: nay to maintain their security, are as unwilling to hear Conscience declare the *wretchedness* of their condition with respect to Eternity, as *Ahab* was the Prophet *Michaiah*, who always foretold evil things to him.

'Twas the chief design of the Philosophers by Principles of Reason to fortify themselves against all frightful Accidents, and with a masculine Mind, and an Heart ardent with generous Spirits to ‖ encounter this inevitable Evil.

‖ *Fœlix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas: Atque metus mortis & inexorabile fatum Subjecit pedibus.* Virgil.

Evil. When one of them was threatned by the Emperor *Theodosius* with present Death, he boldly replied, Threaten this to your dissolute Courtiers that are softned and melted by sensual pleasures, and easily receptive of terrible Impressions; not to a Philosopher to whom Death is contemptible in any appearance. This was a piece of affected Bravery, for Pagan Philosophy could never furnish them with Armor of Proof against the Dart of our last Enemy. But the Gospel assuring us that Death is an entrance into Immortality, makes that to be the reality of a Christian, that was a vain boast of the Philosophers.

Now that we may be established in that blessed Tranquility that Death cannot dispossess, the following Directions are infinitely useful.

1. We

We must give all diligence to be in a state of Reconciliation with God. The things requisite to that are, as the Apostle declares, *Repentance towards God, and Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.* Repentance includes a Godly sorrow for Sins past, with a detestation and forsaking them sincerely, without hypocrisy, and entirely, without partiality in the heart and conversation. It is call'd *Repentance from dead works:* the proper name of our Sins, that deserve eternal Death. By repentance we return to Obedience that is due to God our Maker and Lawgiver. Faith respects the Redeemer, who by his Blood shed on the Cross, and pleaded in Heaven, reconciles God to penitent Sinners. The belief of his merciful and powerful Mediation for our acceptance and Pardon, *works by Love,* and con-

Act. 20. 21.

Heb. 6. 1.

2 Cor. 5. 14.

strains

strains us to dedicate our selves in a devoted propriety to his Glory and Service, and to live according to that Dedication. These two are absolutely necessary to the vital and salvifical state of a Christian. And as soon as a person sincerely repents and believes, he is justified before God, and if he dies will certainly obtain eternal Glory. This should be the early and most speedy work of our Lives: for the delay of Repentance, and neglect of securing the Favour of God, arms Death with more stings and terrors.

(1.) 'Tis direct Rebellion against God, who commands us to *hear his Voice to day*, obediently and immediately, upon no less penalty than being excluded from his blessed Rest for ever. Yet the self-flattering Sinner preaches another Gospel to himself, and runs in

Heb. 2. 7, 8. *Quis enim satis explicet verbis quantum mali sit non obedire tanto potestatis imperio, et tanto terrenti supplicio?*

in hazard of Damnation and the eternal Curse every hour.

(2.) 'Tis the most provoking Abuse of his Mercy and Patience that *should lead Men to Repentance*. He can in the twinkling of an Eye, in the beating of a Pulse, cut off the Sinner: 'tis as easy to his power as to will it. And there's no consideration should be so melting and moving as his Clemency. We reade of *David* that he had more than once in his power *Saul* his unjust and implacable enemy, and spared him: the effect of it was, that *Saul* became so softned, and under such compunction of spirit, that he wept, confest his guilt, and desisted from persecuting him, overcome by that unexampled Love: *If a Man find his Enemy, will he let him go?* And yet Men take advantage from the goodness of God securely to despise his Laws. (3.) How

1 Sam. 26. 21.

(3.) How justly will this tender divine Mercy inexorable to their Prayers and Tears in their extremity? When a Roman Gentleman, that had wasted a great Estate by Luxury, and was wont to revel in the Night and sleep in the Day, petitioned the Emperor *Tiberius* to relieve his poverty, he was dismist with this upbraiding Answer, *Sero experrectus es*, You are risen too late. He never opened his Eyes to see his Condition till it was past remedy. This is the sad case of many Souls that waste the seasons of Grace, and are careless of their Duty till they are upon the point of perishing, and then addicts themselves to God for his Favour and Pardon, but are justly rejected with the reproaches of their obstinate neglect of Salvation in the time of their lives.

(4.) Re-

Repentance that is indispensably required to qualify us for Mercy, is far more difficult and hazardous by Means deferring of it. The languishing disposition that seals up the Damnation of the Sinner, is Impenitence. Now he that delays the returning to his Duty, shall have more cause to repent hereafter, but less will and power. For the continuance in Sin hardens the heart, and that which is indisposition, will become averseness and obstinacy. The heart with difficulty changes its last end: Actions may be suddenly changed, when there is a disability to perform them, but the inward inclination to Sin, without supernatural Grace, remains. And is it reasonable to expect the least breathings of the Spirit, any divine Assistance, after long resisting his holy Excitations?

tations? God threatens, My Spirit shall not always strive with Man; And to the forsaken Sinner the seasons of Grace are as irrevocable as his wasted and spent time. The Delayer does not trust, but tempt divine Mercy.

(7.) The numerous Examples of those who have deferred Repentance and Reconciliation with God, and at last died in their sins, should terrify Men, if they are not wrought on in a more excellent way. 1. Some presume upon the vigour of their Youth or Complexion, and think when they have satiated themselves with the pleasures of Sin, when they have the freest vacancy, and are retired from the affairs of the World, there will be a convenient season for making their peace with God. And how often are they suddenly cut off, the first symptom of

their

their ſickneſs is Death, and what the Angel with ſuch ſolemnity declares, *that time ſhould be no more*, is verified concerning them, by an unexpected diſſolution. 2. Some that continue a while in ſickneſs and languiſhings, do not apply themſelves ſeriouſly to God, upon the hopes of recovery. And this hope is cheriſh'd by the mortal love, the cruel deceit of friends, who are unwilling to let them ſee their danger, leſt their ſpirits ſhould ſink under it. And thus many die in an unprepared ſtate. 3. Others that are guilty, and graceleſs, tho diſtant from Death and Hell but a few hours, are ſecure as *Jonah*, who ſlept in the midſt of a Tempeſt at Sea. The tenour of their lives diſcovers this to be divine Vengeance, they are ſeiz'd with a ſpirit of ſlumber, and go, without fear, into the

state of everlasting desperation.

4. Others who have lived in careless security, as if they had *made a Covenant with Death*, yet upon the near approaches of it, when they see Death before them attended with Judgment, and Judgment Hell; as we read of *Sisera*, who from extream Fear part to extream Security: so on the contrary, these self-deceivers from extream Security have fallen into extream Fear. Then Truth and Conscience, that were so long under unrighteous restraints, break the Fetters, and terribly charge the sinner. Then innumerable Acts which they thought to be innocent, appear to be sins, and sin that they made light of, to be infinitely evil, and in the highest degree hateful to God. And sometimes by the suggestions of the enemy of souls, they are over-

whelm'd

whelm'd with deſpair, and their laſt Error is worſe than the firſt.

5. Others are deceived with things that are ſhort of true repentance, and miſtake a falſe peace for a true, and aſſwage the anguiſh of Conſcience by palliating remedies. Their ſorrowful ſenſe of Sin, their Prayers, their reſolutions of Amendments, are the product of ſervile Fear, that is ineffectual to Salvation. And as 'tis with crafty Tradeſmen that take up much upon truſt when they are ready to breaking; ſo they are very liberal of their promiſes of Reformation, when in their own apprehenſion near dying. But how often does Experience convince us of the inefficacy of a ſick-bed Repentance? How many that were very penitent and devout, with one foot as it were in the Grave, and another in Hell,

and were as a Brand pluck'd out of the Fire, and the fear of Death being removed, all the pangs of Conſcience, the religious Affections that were felt and expreſt by them vaniſh as the morning dew? Now converting Grace is diſtinguiſh'd by its radication and efficacy, not only from the meer pretences of thoſe who know their own inſincerity, but from the real workings of Conſcience, and the imperfect diſpoſitions to good that are in the Unrenewed. And thoſe perſons who with the return of Health have returned to their Sins again, if they had died with their religious reſolutions, would have preſum'd that *their repentance was unto Life*, and of their intereſt in the divine Mercy. *The Heart is deceitful above all things*, and above all things deceitful to it ſelf.

6. But

6. But ſuppoſing in the laſt hours there be an unfeigned cloſing with Chriſt according to the Goſpel-Covenant, and a cordial change from the love of Sin to the love of Holineſs, this perſon ſhall certainly not miſs of Heaven, but Death will be leſs comfortable, than if he had in the courſe of his Life declared the truth and power of Grace in ſuch acts and fruits as are ſuitable to it.

The ſum is this: the vain hope of living long, and being reconciled to God when they pleaſe, is the fatal foundation of Mens Sins and Miſery. They apply the Word of God againſt the Mind of God, and ſecurely provoke him, as if they could take Heaven by violence in contradiction to the Goſpel. But they uſually diſpoſe of that time they ſhal never injoy,

or presume upon that pardoning Mercy and assisting Grace they shall never obtain. We are commanded to *seek the Lord while he may be found*, a sad intimation that 'tis not in our power to find him to our comfort when we please. He spares long, but abused Patience will deliver Sinners to revenging Justice. *Sampson* was three times in the Chamber of his Lust exposed to Treachery and escap'd, but the fourth time he said, *I will arise*, but was surpriz'd by his Enemies, and lost his strength and sight and liberty. I doubt not that some are wonderfully converted and saved at last, but these special Mercies are like our Saviour's passing in the Way, and by his miraculous Virtue healing the two blind persons, when great numbers remain'd uncured. We read a prodigious story in the

Book of *Kings* that a Captain and his fifty went to *Elias* to command him to come to the King; and immediately a tempeſt of Lightning deſtroyed them. Now who would think it poſſible that another Captain and his fifty ſhould be ſo deſperate, that having the Aſhes and Reliques of theſe miſerable Carcaſes ſmoking before their Eyes, as to make the ſame Citation to the Prophet: yet they did, and provok'd the Juſtice of Heaven to conſume them. And this is verified in thouſands every day; for notwithſtanding they ſee ſinners like themſelves ſuddenly cut off in their evil ways, they perſiſt unreformed as if they were fearleſs of Hell, nay as if reſolved to ſecure their own Damnation. I have inſiſted the longer on this, becauſe 'tis ſo univerſally uſeful. 2 *King.* 1.

2. The careful preserving our selves from wilful presumptuous Sins, is an happy means to render Death comfortable to us. The Spirit seals our Pardon and title to Heaven as the holy Spirit, his Testimony that *we are the Children of God, and Heirs of Glory*, is concurrent with the renewed Conscience, and distinguish'd from the ignorant presumptions, blind conjectures, and carnal security of the unholy. As the sanctifying Spirit he distinguishes true Christians from the lost World, appropriates them to God, confirms their present interest in the Promises of the Gospel, and their future hopes. Briefly, Grace is the most sensible effect and sign of God's special Favour, the fruit of Election, and the earnest of Glory; and the truth of Grace is most

clearly

clearly and certainly made evident by the continual efficacy of it in the Conversation. The observation of our Hearts to suppress unholy affections, and of our senses to prevent them, a constant course of Holiness in our lives, (tho many frailties will cleave to the best) is usually rewarded with greate peace here.

God has establish't a connexion between our Obedience and his Comforts. Those that keep themselves pure from the defilements of the World, have the white *Stone* promised, the bright Jewel of Assurance of God's pardoning and rewarding Mercy. We read of *Enoch* that he walk't with God, was a Star shining in a corrupt Age, the tenour of his Life was holy, and he was translated to Heaven without seeing Death. Tho

Tho this was an extraordinary Dispensation, yet there is a peculiar reward analogical to it, for those who walk circumspectly: they shall not see Death with its terrors, but usually have a holy Chearfulness, a peaceful Joy, in their passage through the dark Valley to Heaven. But presumptuous Sins against external and internal restraints, the convincing Law of God, and the directions of Conscience, grieve the Holy Spirit, and wound our Spirits, and, if continued, sequester us from the comfortable privileges of the Gospel, and render us unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven. And when they are retracted by Repentance, yet there often remains a bitter remembrance of them: as deep Wounds, tho cur'd, yet are felt in change of weather. And some-

ſometimes a ſpring-tide of doubts and fears breaks into humble penitent ſouls, in the laſt hours: tho Death brings them ſafely, yet not comfortably to Heaven.

3. The zealous diſcharge of the Duties of our place and calling, the conjunction of our reſolutions and endeavours to glorify God, and do good according to our abilities and opportunities of ſervice, ſweetens the thoughts of Death to us. For the true end and perfection of Life is the Glory of God, and when with fidelity it is employed in order to it, *Death* brings us to the bleſſed *Reſt* from our Labours. Our Saviour when he was to leave the World, addreſt himſelf to his Father, *I have glorified thee on Earth, I have finiſh't the work thou gaveſt me to do. And now Father glorify me with thy ſelf,* Joh. 17.

ſelf, with the Glory which I had with thee before the World was. A Chriſtian that imitates and honours Chriſt, and with diligence perſeveres in weldoing, may with an humble confidence in the Divine Mercy expect the promiſed reward. The reflection upon a welſpent life is joyn'd with a joyful proſpect of God's Favour and acceptance above. But the careleſs and remiſs, thoſe who are wilfully negligent of their Duty, how fearful is Death that ſummons them to give an account of their Talents to the Righteous Lord?

4. A holy indifference of affection to preſent things, makes it eaſie to part with them, and Death leſs fearful to us. *David*, tho a King, declares he was a ſtranger on Earth, not only with reſpect to his tranſient condition, but his inward diſpoſition, and

that

that he was as a weaned Child from the admir'd Vanities of the World. *Chryſoſtom* in a Letter to *Cyriacum* who was tenderly ſenſible of his Baniſhment, wrote to him, You now begin to lament my Baniſhment, but I have done ſo for a long time: for ſince I knew that Heaven was my Country, I have eſteemed the whole Earth a place of exilement. *Conſtantinople*, from whence I am expell'd, is as diſtant from Paradiſe as the Deſert to which they ſend me. But when our affections are ſet upon external things, and we are irregular in our aims, intemperate in our uſe, and immoderate in our delights, how ſenſible & cutting is the diviſion from them? How bitter is Death that deprives a carnal Wretch of all the materials of his frail Felicity? What a ſtorm of paſſions is rais'd

to lose all his good things at once? for 'tis a Rule in Nature, What is poſſeſt with tranſporting Joy, is left with exceſſive Sorrow. As that Ivy that twines ſo cloſely about the Tree, and is intimately faſtned by ſo many roots as there are branches, cannot be pluck'd away without rending the Bark with it; ſo when the World, that was as it were incorporated with the Heart, is taken away, the Heart it ſelf is grievouſly rent by the violent ſeparation. And the infelicity of carnal and worldly perſons is heavily aggravated, in that the guilt in procuring or abuſing thoſe treaſures and delights that they leave here with ſo great ſorrow, will cleave to them, and give Teſtimony againſt them before their Judg. But when the Affections are looſe to the World, and ſet upon Heaven, the ſeparating

Hæc enim eſt infælicitas hominum, propter quæ peccant Morientes his dimittunt, et ipſa pellata ſecum portant. Aug.

with

with the Earth, to no loss but gain, and with that alacrity, as the putting off a vile garment to be cloathed with a Royal Robe. 'Twas the wise Counsel of *Tertullian* to the Women of the first Ages of the Church, not to value and love the Jewels and Ornaments of Gold, that they might be more ready and resolved to obtain by Death Martyrdom, and by Martyrdom Eternal Glory. And that we may disentangle our Souls from those voluntary bands that fasten us to present things, we must have a sincere uncorrupted judgment of their meanness. The Apostle exhorts Christians to moderation in their temper and conversation with respect to the business and enjoyments here, that *they who have Wives, be as tho they had none; that those that rejoice, be as tho they rejoiced not; and they that buy,*

Stemus expeditæ ad omnem vitæ, nihil habentes quod relinquere timeamus; Retinacule ista sunt spei nostræ. De cult. Fœm.

buy, as tho they poſſeſſed not; and they that uſe the World, as not abuſing it: for the faſhion of the World paſſeth away. To a wiſe and pondering Obſerver, what compariſon is there between Shadows and Dreams, and ſubſtantial everlaſting Bleſſedneſs? If Men had the ſame opinion of this World whilſt they live, as they will have when they are to die, they would not ſet over it. They who have magnified temporal Honours and Riches, and lived in Pleaſures without remorſe, yet in their dying hours, when Men ſpeak with moſt feeling and leaſt affectation, how have they vilified thoſe empty appearances of happineſs? with what moving expreſſions declared the vanity and brevity of worldly things? As when the *Iſraelites* were to go through the River *Jordan*, that opened it ſelf

to

to make a free and dry paſſage for them; the lower part of its Waters ran into the Dead Sea, and utterly fail'd: but the Waters that came from above, roſe up and appear'd like a Mountain; thus when Men come to the univerſal paſſage, from this to the next life, inferiour things abſolutely fail, and are loſt in the dead Sea, but the things above, that are eternal, then appear in their true greatneſs, exceeding all humane comprehenſion: from hence is the change of mind and language concerning the one and other.

Joſh. 3. 16. *Ad inſtar Montis intumeſcentis, apparebant procul.*

5. Solemn, affectionate, and frequent Converſe with God in Religious Duties will render Death not fearful to us. The whole life of a Chriſtian, as ſuch, is a *continual Communion with the Father, and with Jeſus Chriſt.* For he performs all good works by divine *Grace* com-

1 John 3.

municated *from above*, and refers all to the Divine Honour. As in a pair of Compaſſes, one foot is fixt in the Center, whiles the other moves in the Circumference: ſo the Heart of a Chriſtian is in Heaven, his aims are for God, whilſt he is active here in the World. His Natural and Civil Actions are heightened to a ſupernatural end: And thus *his Converſation is in Heaven.* But this was ſpoken of before: and that which is now ſpecified is the more immediate Service of God in holy Meditation, Prayer, and the Ordinances of the Goſpel, which is the nobleſt part of the ſpiritual Life.

Our bleſſed Saviour who was a Comprehenſor upon Earth, always ſaw the Face of God, and invariably ſought his Glory in all things, yet had his ſpecial times of Prayer and Heavenly-Communion

nion with God, and the moſt glorious teſtimonies of his Favour in thoſe times. Our Communion with God here is as true as in Heaven, but the influence and fruition is different according to our capacity. When the Soul feels the vigorous exerciſe of the thoughts & affections upon God, and the raiſed operations of Grace in holy Duties, 'tis as certain a ſign of God's Favour and Acceptance, as when Fire deſcended from Heaven to conſume the Sacrifice. And often our affectionate Duties are rewarded with ſenſible Conſolations, and holy Souls are diſmiſt from the Throne of Grace as they ſhall be received at the Throne of Glory, with the reviving teſtimonies of God's approbation. Now the aſſurance of God's Love conquers the fear of Death.

This Communion muſt be frequent. As love and reſpects between Friends are maintained by conſtant Viſits and Letters, and mutual Confidence ariſes from Acquaintance: ſo by the interchange of holy Duties and divine favours we preſerve a lively ſenſe of God's Love, and an humble familiarity with his Majeſty, that his Preſence is not a terror to us. A Chriſtian that walks with God here, when he leaves the World, (to uſe the words of a dying St.) *changes his Room, but not his Company.* God was always with him on Earth, and he ſhall be ever with God in Heaven.

But cold and ſeldom converſe begets ſtrangeneſs, and that makes us ſhy of God. When Religious Duties are performed as a complemental Viſit without zealous Affections, or uſed only in times of

of Affliction and Exigency, as Cordial Waters in ſwooning Fits, the Divine Preſence is uncomfortable to us. They who prefer carnal ſweets before acquaintance with God, cannot with Peace and Joy think of appearing before him. O how unwelcome is Death to ſuch, *for then the Spirit returns to God that gave it.*

6. Let us ſtrengthen our belief of the bleſſed ſtate after Death. Divine Truths loſe their influence and efficacy when they are not ſtedfaſtly believed. *Faith is the ſubſtance of things not ſeen, and the evidence or conviction of things hoped for.* The Spirit confirms our Faith not by a pure Phyſical Act, but by convincing Reaſons of the truth of the Goſpel. The Life of Chriſt ſo glorious in holineſs, his Doctrine ſo becoming the Wiſ- Heb. 11. 1.

dom and other excellent Attributes of the Deity, his Miracles ſo great, numerous, open, and beneficial, not meerly to ſurprize the Spectators with aſtoniſhment, but to touch their Hearts; his Death foretold by the Prophets, and exactly agreeing in all the circumſtances of the Predictions; his Reſurrection the moſt noble operation of the Divine Power, are the ſtrongeſt Proofs that what he has reveal'd as the Counſel of God for our Redemption, and the Preparations of Glory for the Saints in *Heaven*, are divine Truths. And the efficacy of the Spirit of Chriſt in ſanctifying his Diſciples in all Ages, is a continual and as ſatisfying an Argument that the Goſpel is derived from God the fountain of Truth, as extraordinary Miracles. For *Holineſs* is as inſeparable a property of the Divine

vine Nature as Omnipotence; and the ſanctification of the Soul as divine an effect, as the reſurrection of the Body. Now in the Goſpel God enters into Covenant with obedient Believers, *to be their God*, a title and relation, that ſuppoſing them the moſt happy here, all the enjoyments of this World cannot fulfil. This Covenant is not diſſolv'd by Death, for he uſes this ſtile after the death of his faithful Servants: and from hence it follows they are partakers of his Glory and Joys in the next Life. For the honour of his Veracity is moſt dear to him. The Pſalmiſt declares, that he has *magnified his Word above all his Name*. No perfections of his Nature are more ſacred and inviolable than his Truth. The foundations of Nature ſhall be overturn'd, and the moſt ſolid parts of the Creation

deſtroyed, but his Promiſes ſhall be compleatly accompliſh'd. We are aſſured by his Infallible Authority, that *there remains a Reſt for the People of God.* And *he that receives this Teſtimony, ſets to his Seal that God is true*: honours the Truth of God's Word, and binds himſelf more firmly to his Service, and is encouraged to leave this ſenſible World, for that which is infinitly better. Our confidence and patience in well-doing, and in ſuffering the utmoſt evil to Nature, is from the pregnant apprehenſions of the reality of eternal things. *We know*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *if our earthly tabernacle be diſſolved, we have a Building not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.* This fortified him againſt the terrors of Death. When *Stephen ſaw the Heavens open, and the Son of God ready to receive him*, with what courage

2 Cor. 5. 1.

courage and conſtancy did he encounter the bloody Rage of his Murderers? Faith ſupplies the want of Viſion, it pierces the Clouds, opens a Window in Heaven, ſees the Crowns of Righteouſneſs prepared for the Saints, and ſweetens the bittereſt paſſage to it. But if our Faith be weak and wavering, our Courage will decline in the needful hour. 'Tis with Chriſtians in their laſt paſſage from Earth to Heaven, as with the Apoſtle walking upon the Waters to Chriſt: whilſt his Faith was firm in Chriſt, he went upon the Waves as on the firm Land: but upon the riſing of a Storm his Faith ſunk into Fear, and he ſunk in the Waters; till our Saviour upon his earneſt Prayer, *Lord, ſave me*, took hold of him, and rais'd him with that compaſſionate Reproof, *O thou*

of

of little Faith, wherefore didſt thou doubt?

The laſt Uſe is, to excite the *Saints* to die with that courage and chearfulneſs *as becomes the Goſpel of Chriſt.* The encouragement of *Joſhua* to the Iſraelites againſt the Giants that terrified them from entring into the Land of *Canaan*, the type of Heaven, *Be not afraid of them, they are Bread for us*, we ſhall obtain an eaſy Conqueſt over them, is applicable to this purpoſe: do not fear Death the Enemy that interpoſes between us and the true *Canaan*; for our Conflict ſhall be the means of our Victory, and triumphant poſſeſſion of the holy and bleſſed Land above. This is very honourable to our Redeemer, and recommends Godlineſs to the judgment, affections, and

practice

practice of others. *S. Baſil* tells of a cuſtom to annoint the tops of Doves Wings with ſome fragrant liquor, that mixing in company with other Doves, they might by the ſcent allure them to follow to the Dove-houſes. Thus when holy Perſons live and die with peaceful joy, thoſe that converſe with them, are drawn by that Fragrance of Paradiſe to apply them to ſerious Religion. *Epiſt. Jul.*

'Tis the Apoſtle's Conſolatory Advice to Believers, *Not to be ſorrowful for thoſe that ſleep in* JESUS, *as thoſe that are without hope.* 1 Theſſ. 4.

When *Jacob* ſaw his Beloved Son's Coat rent and ſtain'd with Blood, he abandoned himſelf to deſperate Sorrow, and mourned for his Death, when *Joſeph* was advanc'd in Authority and

and Dignity next to *Pharoah* in the Kingdom of *Egypt*. Thus when we ſee the Garment of Mortality rent by Diſeaſes, we mourn for departed Saints, as if Death had abſolutely deſtroyed them, when their Souls are reigning in Glory. This immoderate Sorrow is an Heatheniſh Paſſion, ſuitable to their ignorance of the future happy ſtate, but very unbecoming the plenary Aſſurance the Goſpel affords us of it. So for the Wicked to die with fears and palpitations of heart, to be ſurrounded with impendent horrours, when ſuch a precipice and depth of miſery is before them, is very juſt and reaſonable; but for the Saints to die uncomfortably under inordinate fears, is a diſparagement to the *Bleſſed Hope* eſtabliſh'd *upon the revelation of Life and Immortality by the Goſpel.*

Now

Now in three things I ſhall propound the duty of dying Chriſtians.

1. To ſubmit to the Divine Pleaſure with reſigned ſpirits, as to the means, the manner, and time of Death. God has a Sovereign Right and Dominion over us. The preſent Life is his moſt free Favour, and he may juſtly reſume it when he pleaſes. His Will ſhould be the firſt and laſt Rule of ours. Whether he gently untwines the Band of Life, or violently breaks it, we muſt placidly, without reluctation, yield up our ſelves. By what means ſoever Death comes, all ſecond cauſes are moved by an impreſſion from above, in what Age of Life ſoever, all our times are appointed by the divine Counſel: And a Saint ought with that readineſs and ſubmiſſion receive it,

as

as if he heard an expreſs Voice from Heaven calling him to God, and ſay in his heart with *Samuel*, *Here I am, thou didſt call me.* This is the laſt act of our obedience, and very pleaſing to God. We read of the marvelous * Conſent of *Abraham* and his ſon *Iſaac*, the Father to offer up his Son, and the Son his Life, (that were both the gifts of God) in compliance with the divine Command, and from Heaven he declared his high approbation of it. *This is to make a vertue of neceſsity, and turn Nature into Grace.* But diſcontent and reluctancy, as if our Lives were our own, and taken from us unjuſtly or unſeaſonably, is rebellious unthankfulneſs, unbecoming a Creature, much more a true Chriſtian, who exchanges a periſhing life for that which is eternal.

* *Ille exerit gladium, ille cervicem, uno voto, una devotione: ſub tanto non dicam humanitatis, ſed potius naturæ ipſius metu, læti ſunt.*

2. To

2. To receive Death not only with Patience, but earneſt deſires to be with Chriſt. I know Death is naturally unwelcome. Our Saviour tells St. *Peter*, *When thou art old, another ſhall bind thee, and lead thee where thou wouldeſt not*: Signifying his Martyrdom. The circumſtance [*when thou art old*] is remarkable, and intimates the natural unwillingneſs to die, when there was little time to live. But his rational ſanctified Will was ſuperiour and prevalent. The univerſal deſire of the Saints is to be happy in the preſence of God. for the Divine Nature communicated to them is intelligent and inclining towards its chief good: and if the obtaining it, were not by *being uncloathed, but clothed upon* by an imediate tranſlation to Heaven, how willingly would they leave this World? But there is

John 21.41.

Secutus a corpore volebat eſſe cum Chriſto, ſed ſi fieri poſſet prater mortis moleſtiam. Nolens ad eam venit, ſed volens eam vicit. Aug. *Tract.* 123 *in* Joan.

a bitterneſs in Death that makes it unpleaſant, and many holy Souls that deſire the Glorious Liberty in Heaven, yet are loth to leave their Priſon. Now there are ſo many Arguments to make the Saints deſirous of dying, that methinks ſince Life is cheifly valued and dear to them, as it is the way to Heaven, when they are come to that bleſſed end, it ſhould not be longer deſirable. What is this lower World that chains us ſo faſt? 'Tis the Devil's circuit wherein he ranges ſeeking *whom he may devour*: 'Tis the Theater of contentions: The low aſpire to riſe; the exalted fear to fall. The Poor envy the Rich; and the Rich deſpiſe the Poor. 'Tis a foreign Countrey to the Saints, and as Pilgrims and Strangers, they are liable to reproaches, injuries, and hard dealings from the Wicked,

the

the natives of the Earth. What is the preſent momentány Life that ſo enamours us? 'tis ſurrounded with Temptations, oppreſt with Fears, ardent with irregular deſires, and continually ſpent in vanity or vexation. In Adverſity 'tis depreſt and melancholy: in Proſperity fooliſh and proud. 'Tis a real infelicity under the deceitful appearance of felicity. But above all other motives, the evil of Sin from which we cannot be clearly exempted here, ſhould render Death deſireable. The beſt ſuffer internal diviſions between *the law of the Fleſh, and the law of the Mind*; as *Rebecca* felt the twins, *Eſau* and *Jacob*, repugnant in her Womb. How hard is it to be continually watching the Heart that Corruptions do not break out, and the Senſes that temptations do not break in? How difficult to or-

der the Affections, to raiſe what is drooping, and ſuppreſs what is rebellious? for they are like the People of whom the Hiſtorian ſpeaks, *qui nec totam ſervitutem pati poſſunt, nec totam libertatem.* How many Enemies of our Salvation are lodg'd in our own boſoms? The Falls of the Saints give ſad evidence of this. If the Body were unſpotted from the World as in the Creation of Man, there might be a juſt Plea of our unwillingneſs to part with it, but ſince it is the inſentive and inſtrument of Sin, we ſhould deſire to be deſolved that we might be perfectly holy. Death is the final remedy of all the temporal and ſpiritual evils to which we are liable here. And the love of Chriſt ſhould make us willing to part with all the endearments of this life, nay deſirous to enter into the

the Cæleſtial Paradice, tho we muſt paſs under the Angels Sword the ſtroke of Death to come into his Preſence. He infinitely deſerves our love, for we owe our Salvation and Eternal Glory, to the merit of his Humiliation and the power of his Exaltation. With what earneſt affections did St. *Paul deſire to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt?* Love gave Wings of Fire to his Soul, ardent deſires mounting to Heaven. How valiant were the Martyrs in expreſſing acts of love to Chriſt? How boldly did they encounter Death that interpos'd between them and the ſight of his Glory? their love was hotter than the Flames that conſumed them. They as willingly left their Bodies, as *Elias* let fall his Mantle, to aſcend to Heaven. And how does it upbraid the coldneſs of our love, that we are

Phil. 1.

ſo contented to be here, abſent from our Saviour. That the Moles of the Earth who never ſaw the light of the Sun, and feed on bitter roots, are pleas'd in their dark receptacles is no wonder; but if Birds that are refreſht with his chearful Beams, & feed on ſweet Fruits, ſhould willingly be confin'd in Caverns of the Earth, it were unnaturally ſtrange: thus if Pagans, and thoſe who are ſo in heart, tho different in profeſſion, that are ſo ſhort-ſighted, and depraved, that only preſent and ſenſible things are perceived and affect them, that they are unwilling to die is no wonder; for then all that is valuable and delightful to them is loſt for ever: but for thoſe who are inlightned by the Revelation of God ſo clearly concerning the ſtate of Glory, and have taſted the goodneſs

neſs of the Lord, and know the incomparable difference between the mean and frail felicity here; and the ineſtimable immutable felicity hereafter, for them to be unwilling to leave this World for that which is infinitely better is aſtoniſhing. Such was the love of our Saviour, that his perſonal Glory in Heaven did not fully content him, without the Saints partaking of it with him: *Father I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory*: If our Hearts do not anſwer his, 'tis a ſad indication that we have not an intereſt in him: for the application of his Merits is alwayes joyn'd with the imitation of his Vertues, and the reflection of his Love. The Lovers of Chriſt will joyn with the inflamed Spouſe, *Draw us and we will run after thee*: O looſen our Affections

John 17.

Cant. 1.

affections from this World that we may readily aſcend to thee: they will renew the ſighs of holy *David* in his Baniſhment, *O when ſhall we come and appear before God!*

Laſtly, To die with thankſgiving and joy. 'Tis uſual to compare this Life to a Voyage; the Scripture is the Chard that deſcribes the Coaſts we muſt paſs, and the Rocks we muſt avoid; Faith is the Compaſs that directs the Courſe we muſt ſteer; Love is the Rudder that governs the Motion of the Ship; Hope fills the Sails: Now what Paſſenger does not rejoice at the diſcovery of his Country where his Eſtate and Heart is, and more at the near approach to the Port where he is to land? Is not Heaven the Countrey of the Saints? is not their Birth from above, and their tendency

dency to their Original? and is not the bleſſed Boſom of Chriſt their Port? Oh what joyful thankſgivings are due to God, when by his Spirit and Providence they have happily finiſh'd their Voyage through ſuch || dangerous Seas, and are coming into the Land of the Living? How joyful was to *Noah* the coming of the Dove with an Olive Branch, to ſhew him the Deluge was aſſwaged, and the time was come of his freedom from the troubleſom company of Animals, and from the ſtraitneſs and darkneſs of the Ark, to go forth and poſſeſs the World? How joyful ſhould Death be to a Saint, that comes like the Dove in the evening, to aſſure him the Deluge of Miſery is ceas'd, and the time is come of his enlargement from the Body, his deliverance from the wretched ſinful

|| *Quamdiu in Salo iſto, tamdiu inter naufragia.*

ſinful ſociety here, and his poſſeſſing the Divine World? Holy Souls are immediately tranſported by the Angels to Chriſt, and by him preſented to his Father, without *ſpot or wrinkle*, compleat in Holineſs, and prepared for Communion with him in Glory. How joyfully are they received into *Heaven* by our Saviour and the bleſſed Spirits? they are the reward of his Sufferings, the precious and dear purchaſe of his Blood: The Angels that rejoice at the Converſion of a Sinner, much more at the Glorification of a Saint: and the *Church of the Firſt-born* who have before us enter'd into Glory, have a new acceſſion of Joy, when their younger Brethren arrive to the undefiled immortal Inheritance. And is it not very becoming Believers joyfully to aſcend to the

Seat

Seat of Bleſſedneſs, to the happy Society that inſpires mutual Joys for ever? For our encouragement there are numerous inſtances of Believers that have with peace and joy, tho in various degrees, paſt through the dark Valley to the Inheritance of Light. Some have died with more Joy than they lived, and triumph'd over the laſt Enemy with the vocal Praiſes of God: others with ſilent affections have quietly commended their Spirits into his hand. Some have inward Refreſhings and ſupport; others exuberant Joys and Raviſhments, as if the Light of Glory ſhined into them, or the Veil of Fleſh were drawn, and their Spirits were preſent with the inviſible World. Some of the Martyrs in their cruelleſt Sufferings felt ſuch impreſſions of Confidence and Alacrity, that as in

Accitus ſum ad id miraculi, videri exultantem in morte hominem, & inſultantem morti. Bern. 26 *Serm. in* Cant.

the Houſe of *Lamech* there was accorded at the ſame time two diſcordant Callings by the two
Gen. 4. Brothers; *Jubal the Inventer of the Harp and Organ, and Tubal-Cain the firſt Artificer in Braſs and Iron*: the one practiſed on Inſtruments of Muſick, breathing harmonious ſounds and melodies, the other uſed Hammers & Anvils making noiſe and tumult: So in ſome perſons whilſt the heavieſt ſtrokes fell on their Bodies, their Souls were raviſh'd with the ſweeteſt Joy and Exultation. Indeed 'tis not thus always with the Saints; for tho *Sin* be pardoned, yet the apprehenſions of Guilt may remain. When a Stream is diſturbed it does not truly repreſent the Object: When the Affections are diſordered, the Mind does not judge aright of a Chriſtian's ſtate. A *Serpent* may hiſs when it has

loſt its ſting. Death may terrify when it cannot hurt us. I doubt not but ſome excellent Saints have been in anxieties to the laſt, till their Fears were diſpell'd by the actual fruition of Bleſſedneſs. As the *Sun* ſometimes ſets in dark Clouds, and riſes in a glorious *Horizon*. We reade our Evidences for Heaven by the Light of God's Countenance: his Image is made viſible in our Souls by the illuſtration of his Spirit: and he exerciſes Prerogative in the diſpenſation of his Comforts. 'Tis his pleaſure to beſtow extraordinary Favours on ſome, and deny them to others that are as holy. But every Penitent Believer has juſt cauſe of Joy in Death: for Jeſus Chriſt has reconciled God, deſtroyed Satan, and conquered Death: and the laſt day of his Life is the firſt of his Glory.

FINIS.

Errata *of the Sermons on* Death.

PAge 8. line 19. for *should*, r. *might*.
P. 25. l. 18. f. *lost*, r. *tost*.
P. 32. l. 19. f. *quietly*, r. *guiltily*.
P. 92. l. 12. f. *impossibility*, r. *impassibility*.

The Sermons on Judgment.

P. 11. l. 21. dele *only*.
l. 22. r. *not only the Angels*.
P. 19. l. 23. f. *attaque*, r. *attach*.

SERMONS

UPON

Eternal Judgment.

BY

WILLIAM BATES, D.D.

LONDON;
Printed by *J. D.* for *Brabazon Aylmer*, at the Three Pigeons againſt the Royal Exchange in *Cornhil.* 1683.

SERMONS
UPON
Eternal Judgment.

Acts 17. 31. *Becauſe he hath appointed a Day, in the which he will judg the World in Righteouſneſs, by that Man whom he hath ordained: whereof he hath given aſſurance unto all Men, in that he raiſed him from the dead.*

SAint *Paul* had this Title of Honour eminently conferred upon him, the Apoſtle of the Gentiles: This Office he

performed with perſevering diligence, diffuſing *the Light of Life to thoſe that ſate in darkneſs, and in the ſhadow of Death.* In this Chapter we have recorded the ſubſtance of his Sermon to the *Athenians*; wherein his admirable Zeal and Prudence are remarkable, in the Matter and Order of his Diſcourſe, to convince and perſwade them to receive the ſaving Truth of the Goſpel. He firſt lays down the Principles of Natural Religion, to prepare them for the more eaſy belief of ſupernatural revealed Religion. The depravation of the Minds of Men was in no inſtance more prodigious than in their vilifying Conceits of the Deity: They attributed his Name and Honour to various Idols, and aſcribed to him their own Figure, and which was infinitely more unworthy and

and diſhonourable, their own Paſſions and Vices. They adored their own vain Imaginations. The Idols of their Hearts were erected on their Altars. *Venus* was a Goddeſs, becauſe impure Love reigned in their Breſts. *Bacchus* had Religious Rites, becauſe ſenſual Pleaſures as ſweet as Wine intoxicated their Spirits. Theſe Errors, as groſs as impious, were univerſal: the Philoſophers themſelves were not exempted from the Contagion. The Apoſtle therefore makes uſe of the cleareſt Arguments, to give Authority to the plain conſpiring Voice of Nature, that had ſo long in vain recall'd them from Idolatry to the Worſhip of the only true God. He therefore declares, that the Divine Maker of all things, *the Father of Spirits,* *Verſ.* 29. *could not be repreſented by corporeal*

and corruptible things, but was to be acknowledg'd and ador'd in a manner becoming his ſpiritual and infinite Perfections. That *he made all Nations of one Blood*, tho' diſtinguiſh'd in their Habitations and Times, that they might ſeek and ſerve the one univerſal Creator. And though the Pagan World for many Ages had lived in an unnatural Oblivion of God, and he ſeem'd unconcerned for their violation of his Laws, yet it was not from the defect of Juſtice, but the direction of his Wiſdom, that his Patience was ſo long extended to them. And this he proves by the new and moſt expreſs declaration of his Will: *But now he commandeth all Men every where to repent; becauſe he hath appointed a day, in which he will judg the World in Righteouſneſs, by the Man whom he hath ordained: whereof*

Verſ. 26.

whereof he hath given assurance to all Men, in that he raised him from the Dead.

In the words, the Eternal Counsels of God are revealed in two great things.

1. The determining a time wherein he will righteously judg the World: *He hath appointed a Day.*

2. The designation of the Person by whom he will perform that eminent part of Soveraignty: *by Jesus Christ whom he hath raised from the Dead.*

In order to the handling of the main Point, it is requisite to premise briefly some Propositions.

1. That God is the Universal Monarch of the World, and has supreme Authority to govern reasonable Creatures, antecedent

to their Election and Conſent. The Pſalmiſt calls to the Heathens, *Know ye that the Lord is God*: that is, the moſt glorious Being, and abſolute Sovereign; *for it is he that made us, and not we our ſelves.* He formed all things by his Almighty Goodneſs, and is King by Creation. *Pſal.* 100.

2. The two principal and neceſſary parts of his Soveraignty are, to give Laws for the ruling of his Subjects, and to paſs final Judgment upon them for their Obedience or Diſconformity to his Precepts. Mere natural Agents are regulated by a wiſe eſtabliſhment, that is the Law of their Creation. The Sun and Stars are moved according to the juſt Points of their Compaſs. The Angels are under a Law in Heaven, *and obey his Commandments.* The Humane Nature of Chriſt, though

though advanced to the higheſt capacity of a Creature, *yet received a Law.* And his whole Work upon Earth for our Salvation, was an Act of Obedience to the Will of God. If a Prince out of affection to his Friend will leave his own Dominions, and live privately with him in a Forreign Country, he muſt be ſubject to the Laws of the Place. Indeed it is not conceivable that a Creature ſhould be without a Law; for this is to make it ſupreme and independent: Supreme, in not being liable to a ſuperior Power to confine and order it: Independent, as to its Being and Operations; for dependance neceſſarily infers ſubjection. There is a viſible connexion between thoſe Titles; *The Lord is our Judg, the Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our King.* And ſometimes in *Iſa.* 33.22.

Scrip-

Scripture his Soveraignty is intimated in the Title of Judg: thus in that humble Expoſtulation of *Abraham* for *Sodom*; *Shall not the Judg of all the World do right?* He addreſſes his requeſt to God under that Title, to ſoften his Power, and incline his Clemency to ſave the Wicked for their ſakes who were comparatively Righteous, that is, innocent *of their crying Sins.*

3. As his right to govern and judg the World is natural, ſo are his Attributes, his Wiſdom, Holineſs, Juſtice, and Power, that qualify and render him moſt worthy to exerciſe this Government. Theſe are finite ſeparable Qualities in Angels or Men, but eſſential Perfections to the Deity. 'Tis more rational to conceive that things may be congeal'd by the heat of Fire, or turn'd

turn'd black by whiteneſs, than that the leaſt act of injuſtice can be done by the Righteous Lord. The Apoſtle rejects with extreme deteſtation, the blaſphemous Charge of unrighteouſneſs in God's proceedings: *Is God unrighteous that taketh Vengeance? God forbid: For then how ſhall God judg the World?* He may as ſoon renounce his Nature, and ceaſe to be God, for as ſuch he is neceſſarily Judg of the World, as violate his own Perfections in his judicial proceedings with us. *Rom.*3.5,6.

4. God being inviſible in his own Nature, hath moſt wiſely ordained the laſt Judgment of the World to be tranſacted by a viſible Perſon: becauſe Men are to be only judged, and not the Angels, and the whole Proceſs of it with them, will be for things done in the

the Body. The Perſon appointed for this Great Work, is Jeſus Chriſt the Son of God united to the Humane Nature. *The Father judgeth no Man*: Not as if he deſcended from the Throne, and deveſted himſelf of his Supremacy, but not immediately; *but hath committed all Judgment to the Son.* And it follows, *As the Father hath Life in himſelf, ſo hath he given to the Son to have Life in himſelf: And hath given him authority to execute Judgment alſo, becauſe he is Son of Man*; that is, as Mediator. The quality of this Office requires no leſs Perſon for the diſcharge of it.

*Joh.*5.22.

*Verſ.*26,27.

1. Upon the account of its ſuperlative Dignity. No mere Creature is capable of ſuch a glorious Commiſſion. To paſs a Sovereign Sentence upon Angels and Men, is a Royalty reſerv'd for

for God himſelf. We read that *no Man in Heaven, or Earth, was able to open the Sealed Book of his Eternal Counſels, as unſearchable as deep*: only Jeſus Chriſt who was in the *Boſom of the Father*, the Seat of his Counſels and Compaſſions, and was acquainted with all his Glorious Secrets, could unfold the Order of the Divine Decrees about the Church. And if no Creature was worthy to be admitted into God's Counſel, much leſs to be taken into his Throne. The Eternal Son, *the expreſs Image of his Perſon*, is alone fit to be his authoriſed Repreſentative in Judgment. Our Saviour declares, that the Father inveſted the Son with this Regal Power, that *all Men ſhould honour the Son*, with the ſame religious Reverence, and ſupreme adoration, *as they honour the Father.* *Rev.* 5. *John* 5. 23.

2. Upon

2. Upon the account of the immenſe Difficulty, no mere Creature is able to diſcharge it. To judg the World, includes two things. 1. To paſs a righteous and irrevocable Judgment upon Men for all things done in this Life. 2. The actual execution of the Sentence. And for this no leſs than infinite Wiſdom, and infinite Power are neceſſary. If a ſelect number of Angels of the higheſt Order were deputed, yet they could not manage the judicial trial of one Man. For beſides the innumerable acts and omiſſions in one Life, the ſecrets of the Heart, from whence the guilt or goodneſs of Moral Actions is principally derived, are not open to them. He alone that diſcerns all things, can require an account of all.

2. The

2. The Son of Man is inveſted with this High Office as the Reward of his Sufferings. We muſt diſtinguiſh between the eſſential and œconomical Power of Chriſt. The Son of God, conſidered in his Divine Nature, has an original Power of Judgment equal with the Father, but conſidered as Mediator, has a Power by delegation. In the quality of the Son of Man, he is inferior in dignity to the Father: The Apoſtle declares this in that ſcale of Subordination, of the Creatures to Believers, and of Believers to Chriſt, and of Chriſt to God. *All things are yours, and you are Chriſt's, and Chriſt is God's.* Aud obſerving the beautiful Order that ariſes from the ſuperiority and dependance between things, he ſaith, *The Head of every Man is Chriſt, and the*

the Head of the Woman is the Man, and the Head of Chriſt is God. Now this Power by Commiſſion was conferr'd upon him as the Reward of his Sufferings. The Apoſtle expreſly declares it, that Chriſt *being in the Form of God*, and without any uſurpation truly equal to him in Divine Perfections and Majeſty, *humbled himſelf, and came obedient to the Death of the Croſs. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name above every Name: that at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth; and that every Tongue ſhould confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* His victorious Sufferings are the Titles of his Triumphs, his being ſo ignominiouſly depreſt and condemn'd by Men, is the juſt reaſon of his

his advancement to judg the World.

5. There is a Day appointed wherein the Son of Man will appear in ſenſible Glory, and exerciſe his judicial Power upon Angels and Men. He is now *ſeated at the right hand of the Majeſty on High*, and the Celeſtial Spheres are under his Feet: Univerſal Nature feels the power of his Scepter: He reigns in the Hearts of the Saints by his Word and Spirit, and reſtrains the Fury of his Enemies in what degrees he pleaſes: but ſtill his Servants are in diſtreſs, and his rebellious Enemies inſolently break his Laws; and the Curtains of Heaven conceal his Glory from us: therefore a Time is prefix'd, when in the Face of the World he will make an eternal difference by Rewards and Puniſhments

between the Righteous and the Wicked, and his Government ſhall have its compleat and glorious Iſſue. *This is ſtiled the Judgment of the Great Day.*

1. With reſpect to the appearance of the Judg. When the Law was given from Mount *Sinai*, the Mountain was covered with Fire, and the Voice of God as loud as Thunder proclaimed it from the midſt of the Flames, ſo that the whole Army of the Iſraelites was proſtrate on the Plain, ſtruck with a ſacred Horror, and almoſt dead at the amazing ſights and ſounds. From hence 'tis ſaid, that *in his right hand was a fiery Law.* And if the Law-giver appear'd in ſuch terrible Majeſty at the proclaiming the Law, how much more when he ſhall come to revenge the Tranſgreſſions of it? 'Tis ſet forth

forth in Scripture in the moſt lofty and magnificent Expreſſions. *He ſhall come in his Father's Glory, and his own Glory, and the Glory of the Angels.* A devouring Fire ſhall go before him, to conſume all the Works of the Univerſe. He ſhall deſcend from the higheſt Heavens, glorious in the attendance of innumerable Angels, but more in his own Majeſty, and ſit on a *radiant Throne high above all.* Luk. 9. 26.

2, 'Tis great, with reſpect to the appearance of thoſe who are to be judg'd: All the Apoſtate Angels, and the univerſal *Progeny* of *Adam.* The bowels of the Earth, and the bottom of the Sea, and all the Elements ſhall give up the Dead. The mighty Angels the winged Miniſters of Juſtice, ſhall fly to all Parts, and attaque the Wicked to bring them as miſera-

ble Priſoners before that high Tribunal. And thoſe bleſſed powerful Spirits ſhall congregate the Righteous, to preſent them at his right hand.

3. 'Tis great with reſpect to what ſhall be then done: He ſhall perform the moſt glorious and conſummate act of his Regal Office, after a righteous Trial pronounce Judgment, upon which the eternal Deſtiny of the World depends. And immediately the Saints ſhall aſcend with him to the everlaſting Manſions of Glory, and the Wicked ſhall be ſwallowed up in the fiery Gulph for ever.

To define the particular Time when this ſhall be accompliſh'd, is beyond the knowledg of the Angels of higheſt dignity. 'Tis *inter Arcana Imperii*, among the Secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven.

ven. 'Tis obſervable that God has revealed the Times preciſely wherein ſome great Events ſhould come to paſs: after how many Years the *Iſraelites* ſhould be freed from Egyptian Bondage: after what ſpace of Time they ſhould be reſtored from the Captivity of *Babylon*: when the *Meſſiah* ſhould die for the expiation of Sin: but there is no deſignation by certain Characters of the particular Day, nor Year, nor Age, in any Prophecy of our Saviour's coming to Judgment. And of this an Account may be given. The ſpecial End of thoſe Predictions was, that thoſe who lived to ſee their accompliſhment, notwithſtanding the ſeeming Impoſſibilities, might believe the Truth and Power of God to fulfil the Revelation of his Purpoſes for the time to come.

But at the laſt Day, all the Promiſes and Threatnings will be fulfilled, nothing will remain to be the Object of Faith, and conſequently it was ſuperfluous to declare the certain Time, ſince the exact accompliſhment of it according to the prediction, will neither be uſeful to confirm Believers or convert Infidels.

Laſtly, The Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt is the moſt convincing and commanding Evidence of this Doctrine, that he ſhall judg the World. For he was charged with Blaſphemy deſerving of Death for this Teſtimony: *I ſay unto you, hereafter ſhall you ſee the Son of Man ſitting on the right hand of Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven.* He dedicated Martyrdom in his own Sufferings. Now God in raiſing him from the Dead, confirmed

Mat. 26. 64, 65.

the

the truth of his Teſtimony by that viſible Miracle, and the belief of it converted the World to Chriſtianity.

I will now proceed to illuſtrate and prove the main Point, which is this:

That God will judg the World in Righteouſneſs by Jeſus Chriſt.

The Mediator, who ſhall be Judg in the Union of both Natures, conſidered as the Son of God, is eſſentially Holy and Righteous, and conſidered as the Son of Man, was *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, and ſeparate from Sinners.* In him all Vertues ſhin'd in their abſolute Purity: and who is ſo worthy and qualified to reward Holineſs and puniſh Wickedneſs, as *the holy one of God?* 'Tis ſaid of

Heb. 1. him, *Thou haſt loved Righteouſneſs, and hated Iniquity, therefore thy God hath anointed thee with Oil of gladneſs above thy Fellows*: Conſecrated him to the Regal Office, and enrich'd his humane Nature with Endowments ſuitable to it. 'Twas propheſied of him, *The Spirit of the Lord ſhall reſt upon him, the Spirit of Wiſdom and Underſtanding, the Spirit of Counſel and Might, the Spirit of Knowledg, and of the Fear of the Lord; and ſhall make him of quick underſtanding in the Fear of the Lord, and He ſhall not judg after the ſight of his Eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his Ears. But with Righteouſneſs ſhall he judg the Poor, and reprove with Equity.* Humane Judgments are often unrighteous from vicious Reſpects and Affections that pervert the Will, or fair Appearances that deceive the Underſtanding:

Eſa. 11.2, 3,4.

ſtanding: by Gifts or Guile, Innocence is caſt, and Guilt acquitted: but the Judg of the World is inflexible to partiality, and all things *are entirely open to his ſight.* In the Act of Judgment he is repreſented *ſitting on a white Throne,* *Rev.*20.11. the emblem of unſpotted Holineſs.

The Righteouſneſs of God's Judicial Proceedings will appear by conſidering three things.

1. The Equity of his Law the Rule of the great and final Judgment.

2. The Evidence of the Facts and Matter, which ſhall be produc'd as the Reaſon of the Judgment.

3. The impartiality of the Sentence.

1. The

1. The Equity of the Law which ſhall be the Rule of the laſt Judgment. This will appear by conſidering the Law of Nature, and the Law of Faith, in their Precepts and Penalties, annext to enforce the obſervation of them.

1. The Law of Nature, which is the Rule of Man's Duty, will be the Rule of Judgment: for *without the Law there is no Tranſgreſſion*; and conſequently a Perſon is unaccountable for his Actions. This Law is compoſed of ſuch Rules as are moſt becoming the wiſe and gracious Creator to give, and the reaſonable Creature to receive and obey: for they entirely agree and concenter in his Glory and the good of his Subjects. The Apoſtle adorns the Law with the moſt ex-

excellent Elogy, *'tis Holy, Juſt, and Good.* *Holy* as it enjoyns all Acts of Piety to God: the adoration of his Majeſty reſulting from his inexpreſſible divine Perfections, the imitation of his Purity, a reliance on his Goodneſs, a reſignation to his moſt wiſe Providence, and a dutiful obedience to his Will. Such a ſenſe of our dependance and ſubjection to God, is the proper Character of the reaſonable Creature, as dignified above inanimate and mere ſenſitive Beings. *The Law is juſt,* as it directs us how to demean our ſelves in our various Relations. Juſtice is the Cement of Societies, without which they disband and fall into Confuſion. And the ſum of the Law is virtually compriſed in one Rule, *to do to others as we would they ſhould do to us,* than which nothing is more equal. *Rom.*7.12.

equal. 'Tis *good* to Man that keeps it, commanding nothing but what is influential upon his well-being here and for ever. It does not infringe his true Freedom, but allows him unſtain'd Delights, and enjoyns what is proper to advance and ſecure his Dignity, Felicity, and Perfection. It forbids every thing that defiles and debaſes him, and cauſes a degeneration from his native excellency. If we preſcind in our thoughts the ſacred authority of the Law-giver, all the Precepts of the Law for their moral Goodneſs, deſerve our eſteem and choice, and entire obſervation. The ſanctified Mind approves them univerſally. *I eſteem all thy Precepts concerning all things to be right*, ſaith holy *David*. Nay, in the Wicked there is an intellectual aſſent to the goodneſs

Pſal. 119. 128.

neſs of the Law, tho' the corrupt Will doth not embrace it: there are ſome inclinations and wiſhes to obey it, but controll'd by vicious deſires. 'Tis ſaid of the convinced Sinner, *Thou knoweſt his Will, and approveſt the things that are more excellent.* Rom. 2. 18.

It may be objected, that the Law being pure, and Man in a frail ſtate, ſurrounded with innumerable temptations, to require perfect obedience from him, and condemn him for his Failings, ſeems hard. The Law lays a reſtraint upon all the Senſes, and forbids all fleſhly Luſts; this may be eaſy to ſeparate Souls, but for Men to live in the Body, as if they were out of it, to be always vigilant againſt the inſinuations or attaques of Sin, is impoſſible. Thus the Carnal Mind is apt with ſome colour, to traduce the

the Righteousness of God's Government. But it will be clearly vindicated, by considering,

1. The Law supposes Man in a state of integrity, furnish'd with sufficient Power to comply with every Precept, tho' free to fall from his Duty and Happiness. To command absolute Impossibilities, is tyrannical, and utterly inconsistent with the Nature of the Blessed God.

2. The first Man wilfully transgrest the Law, and lost his Holiness: And Nature being poison'd in the Fountain, is corrupt in all the descendants from him. Mankind was justly degraded in rebellious *Adam*, and is destitute of spiritual strength to perform all that the Law requires.

3. This disability is vicious and culpable, and can be no pre-

tence

tence againſt the Rights of the Law-giver. A natural diſability from the want of requiſite Faults is a juſt excuſe. 'Tis no Fault that a Man cannot ſtop the Sun as *Joſhua* did, nor calm a Tempeſt as our Saviour did by his Word. But the diſability that ariſes from a depraved diſpoſition, renders a Perſon more guilty. And this is the preſent Caſe. The Will of Man is diſobedient and perverſe, and as ſoon as it can exerciſe Election, chooſes Evil: and by cuſtom in Sin becomes more hardened and obſtinate. And from hence the Prophet charges the contumacious Jews; *Behold their Ear is uncircumciſed, and they cannot hearken.* Jer. 6. 10. Were they uncapable of hearing the Divine Commands? No, *but the Word of the Lord was to them a reproach, they had no delight in it.*

it. And our Saviour upbraids the Phariſees, *How can ye believe,* Joh. 5. 44. *which receive Honour one of another, and ſeek not the Honour that comes from God only.* They were in high reputation for their *Holineſs*, which made it impoſſible for them in an humble penitent manner to ſubmit to our Saviour. In ſhort, the primary end of the Law was the happineſs of Man in the performance of his Duty, and his firſt Sin, and conſequent impotence to fulfil it, was by his own Fault. As the Obliquity of a Line cannot be aſcrib'd to the ſtrait Rule, but to the Error of the Hand that draws it. And from hence 'tis clear, that if God ſhould with a terrible exactneſs require of Men unſinning Obedience upon the pain of Damnation, he could not be taxt with unrighteouſneſs.

But

But God has been pleaſed to mitigate and allay the Severity of the Law by the Goſpel; ſo that although the leaſt breach of it makes a Perſon an Offender and obnoxious to Judgment, yet the Law of Faith propounds ſuch merciful Conditions to the Guilty, that upon the performance of them, they may plead their Pardon ſeal'd with the Blood of their Redeemer, and ſhall be ſaved and crown'd in the Day of Judgment. We are commanded ſo *to ſpeak and do, as they that ſhall be judged by the Law of Liberty.* Thus the Goſpel is ſtiled, in that it frees the Conſcience, tho' not from the obedience, yet from the terrors and condemnation of the Law; for there was not the leaſt ſignification of Mercy by it. But in the Goſpel, the *Grace of God moſt illuſtriouſly appears.* *James* 2. 12.

1. In that when our Innocence was loſt, there may be a renovation of the Sinner by Repentance: to which the plenary pardon of Sin is aſſured, *Waſh ye, make ye clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine Eyes: Ceaſe to do evil, and learn to do well, ſaith the Lord: vnd tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they ſhall be white as Snow; tho' they be red like Crimſon, they ſhall be white like Wooll.* God will not pardon thoſe who forgive and flatter themſelves in their Sins; *but thoſe who confeſs and forſake them, ſhall find mercy.*

Iſa. 1. 16, 17, 18.

2. Sincerity of Obedience is accepted where Perfection is wanting. When a Perſon with conſent of Heart and ſerious endeavours ſtrives to obey the Holy Will of God, without the exception of any known Duty, or the indulgence of any Sin, *God will*

will ſpare him, as a Father ſpares his Son that ſerves him. 'Tis not ſo much the Matter as the Allowance that makes Sin deadly. Where there is guile in the heart, it will be ſeverely imputed. 'Tis not according to ſome particular Acts of Sin, but the Tenor of the Life, that the ſtate of Men will be decided. *Mal.* 3. 17.

3. Unfeigned Faith in the Lord Jeſus, that is, ſuch a belief of the Truth and Goodneſs of his Promiſes, as induces us *to receive him as our Prince and Saviour*, as purifies the Conſcience, the Heart, and Life, will free us from Hell, and entitle us to Heaven, according to the Covenant of Grace. In ſhort, the final Reſolution of a Man's Trial and Caſe will be this; either he has performed the gracious Conditions of the Goſpel, and he ſhall

be ſaved; or rejected them, and he ſhall *be damned.*

If it be objected, that the terms of Evangelical Juſtification, tho' in themſelves comparatively eaſy, yet are of impoſſible performance to Men in their natural ſinful ſtate. The Anſwer is clear;

1. That although the *natural Man be dead in Sin*, without ſpiritual ſtrength to reſolve and perform his Duty, and holy heat of deſires to it; and nothing is alive in him but his corrupt Paſſions, that are like Worms generated in a Carcaſe; yet by the Grace that is offered in the Goſpel, he may be enabled to perform the Conditions of it, for in this the Goſpel excels the Law: the Law diſcovers Sin, but affords no degrees of ſupernatural Power to ſubdue it, and directs to no means for the expiation of its

its Guilt. As *the Fire in the Buſh* diſcovered the Thorns without conſuming them. But the ſanctifying Spirit, the true Spring of *Life and Power*, is the concomitant of the Goſpel, as St. *Peter* declares, *With the preaching of the Goſpel the Holy Ghoſt was ſent down from Heaven.* And the Spirit by illuminating, preventing, and exciting Grace, aſſiſts Men to repent and believe; and is promiſed in rich and liberal ſupplies to all that humbly and ardently pray for it. This our Saviour aſſures to us by a moſt tender and endearing Compariſon: *If ye that are evil know how to give good things to your Children, how much more ſhall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask it?*

2 *Tim.* 1. 7.

1 *Pet.* 1. 12.

Luk. 11. 13.

2. From hence it follows, that 'tis from the perverſeneſs of the

Will, and the love of Sin, that Men do not obey the Goſpel. For the Holy Spirit never withdraws his gracious aſſiſtance, till *reſiſted*, *grieved*, and *quenched by them*. It will be no excuſe that Divine Grace is not conferr'd in the ſame eminent degree upon ſome as upon others that are converted: for the impenitent ſhall not be condemned for want of that ſingular powerful Grace that was the priviledg of the Elect, but for *receiving in vain* that meaſure of common Grace that they had. If he that received *one Talent* had faithfully improved it, he had been rewarded with more, but upon the ſlothful and ingrateful neglect of his Duty, he was juſtly deprived of it, and caſt into a Dungeon of Horrour, the Emblem of Hell. The Sentence of the Law has its full force

force upon impenitent Sinners, with intollerable aggravations for neglecting the Salvation of the Goſpel.

Concerning the Heathens, the Scripture declares,

1. That although the Law publiſh'd by *Moſes* was not communicated to them, yet there was a ſilent, though leſs perfect Impreſſion of it in their Hearts. The Law of Nature in the fundamental Precepts of Religion, and Society, and Temperance, was better known than obeyed by them. Therefore the Apoſtle endites them for atrocious Crimes, ſuch as natural Conſcience conſenting with the Law of God, ſeverely forbids upon the pain of damnation. Thus 'tis ſaid of the Heathens, *who knowing the Judgment of God, That* *Rom.* 1. 26, 27. *Rom.* 1.32.

they which commit ſuch things are worthy of death; not only commit the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them. And at the laſt Day,

Rom. 2. *As many as have ſinned without the Law, as delivered to the Jews, ſhall be judged and periſh, not according to that Law of* Moſes, but the Law of Nature that obliged them to do good, and reſtrain themſelves from Evil; of which the counterpart was not totally deleted in their Hearts.

2. Although the Revelation of Chriſt in his Perſon, Office, and Benefits, is not by the preaching of the Goſpel (that is neceſſary for the *begetting of Faith*) extended to all Nations; yet the Grace of the Redeemer is ſo far univerſal, that upon his account the indulgent Providence of God invited the Heathens to Repentance. His renewed Benefits

Rom. 2. 4.

that

that ſweetned their Lives, and his powerful patience in forbearing ſo long to cut them off, when their Impurities and Impieties were ſo provoking, was a teſtimony of his inclination to clemency upon their reformation. And for their abuſing his Favours, and reſiſting the methods of his Goodneſs, they will be inexcuſable to themſelves, and their condemnation righteous to their own Conſciences. *Acts* 14. 17.

We are next to conſider the Sanction of the Law that enforces Obedience, and it will appear that God is not extream, but wiſely and juſtly ordained Eternal Death to be the puniſhment of Sin.

This will appear by conſidering,

1. The

1. The end of the Sanction is to preſerve the Authority of the Law in its full vigour, to render it moſt ſolemn and awful; and conſequently the puniſhment muſt be ſo heavy, as to overpoiſe all Temptations that might otherwiſe induce the Subjects to tranſgreſs its Precepts.

Therefore to *Adam* the firſt and ſecond Death was threatned upon his Diſobedience; and Fear as a Sentinel was planted in his Breaſt, that no guilty Thought, no irregular Deſire, no deceitful Suggeſtion ſhould enter to break the Tables of the Law depoſited therein. Now ſince notwithſtanding the threatning, Man was ſo eaſily ſeduc'd by the inſinuations of the Tempter to break the Law, and diſorder the Government of God in the World, 'tis evident that ſuch a reſtraint

was

was not over-rigorous to ſecure his Obedience. I ſhall not inſiſt on what is ſadly viſible ſince the firſt Apoſtacy, that there is in Mankind ſuch a prodigious propenſity to ſenſual things, that without the fear of Hell, no Arguments are ſtrong enough to prevent the bold violation of the Divine Law.

2. 'Tis conſented to by common Reaſon, that there ought to be a proportion between the quality of the Offence, and the degrees of the Puniſhment. Juſtice takes the Scales into its hand before it takes the Sword. Now ſin againſt God is of ſuch an immenſe Guilt, that an eternal Puniſhment is but equivalent to it. This will appear by conſidering,

—Adſit Regula peccatis, quæ pœnas irroget æquas. *Horat.*

1. The Perfections of the Law-giver who is infinitely a-

bove

bove us. One Act of Sin is rebellion againſt God, and includes in it the contempt of his Majeſty, before whom the higheſt Angels
*Iſa.*6.2,3. *cover their Faces* with reverence and adoration, as unworthy to behold his Glory, and *cover their Feet* as unworthy that he ſhould behold them: the contradiction of his Holineſs that is his peculiar Glory: the denial of his Omniſcience and Omnipreſence, as if he were confin'd to the ſu-
Job 22. 14. perior World, and buſy in regulating the harmonious order of the Stars, and did not diſcern and obſerve what is done below: the defiance of his Eternal Power, and *provoking him to jealouſy, as if we were ſtronger than he.*

2. If we conſider the Obligations of the reaſonable Creatures to obey his Commands, the guilt

of

of Sin riſes prodigiouſly. They were made by his Power with this ſpecial character of Excellency, according to his Image: they were happy in his Love: they were endowed with intellectual Faculties capable to underſtand and conſider their Obligations to their bountiful Lord. From hence it appears that Sin is the moſt unnatural Rebellion againſt God, and in it there is a concurrence of Impiety, Ingratitude, Perfidiouſneſs, and whatever may inhance a Crime to an exceſs of Wickedneſs.

3. The meanneſs of the Motives that induce Men to prefer the pleaſing their depraved Appetites before Obedience to his Sacred Will, extreamly aggravates the Offence. Of this we have a convincing Inſtance in the firſt Sin committed upon Earth. Deceitful

ceitful Curioſity, flattering Pride, a ſecret pleaſure of acting according to his own Will, join'd with the low attractives of ſence, blinded and tranſported *Adam* to eat the Mortal Fruit, againſt the expreſs Command of God. And ever ſince, the vaniſhing ſhadows of Honour, or Gain, or Pleaſure, are the only perſwaſives to Sin. And what can be more provoking, than for a Trifle to tranſgreſs the Law of God, and equally deſpiſe his Favour and Diſpleaſure? Can any puniſhment leſs than Eternal expiate ſuch Impieties? The Rules of Humane Juſtice may diſcover to us the Equity of the Divine Juſtice. 'Tis ordained by the wiſeſt States, that many Crimes which may be done in a few minutes, ſhall be puniſh'd with Death, and the Offender be deprived of his

his natural Life for ever: And is it not moſt juſt that Treaſon againſt the *Great and Immortal King*, ſhould be revenged with Everlaſting Death?

4. That which farther clears the Divine Juſtice in puniſhing Sin with Hell, is this, That God by his infallible Promiſe aſſures us, that all who ſincerely and uniformly obey him, ſhall be rewarded with Heaven for ever: a Bleſſedneſs moſt worthy the greatneſs and love of the Eternal God to beſtow upon his Servants: a Bleſſedneſs that ſurpaſſes our moſt comprehenſive Thoughts. Now if Everlaſting Glory be deſpiſed, what remains but endleſs Miſery to be the Sinner's Portion? The Conſequence is remedileſs. If Sin with an eternal Hell in its Retinue be choſen and embrac'd, is it not

equal

equal that the rational Creature ſhould inherit his own choice? How juſt is it that thoſe who are the Slaves of the Devil, and maintain his Party here, ſhould have their recompence with him for ever? That thoſe who *now ſay to the Almighty, depart from us, we deſire not the knowledg of thy Ways*, ſhould hear the Dreadful *Depart from me into everlaſting Fire?* As there will be no vain-boaſting in Heaven, where the Reward is the Gift of pure Bounty; ſo there will be no righteous Complaint againſt God in Hell, where the Puniſhment is inflicted by powerful Juſtice. He that voluntarily ſins, by conſequence chuſes the Puniſhment due to it.

5. The eſtimation of an Offence is taken from the diſpoſition of him that does it. When

'tis

'tis done with pleaſure and obſtinacy, there is no place for Favour. Now final impenitence alone makes Sin actually and eternally damning to the Sinner. Thoſe that, notwithſtanding all gracious Means, live continually in rebellion againſt God, thoſe that impenitently die in their Sins, thoſe that deſire to live here for ever, that they might enjoy their ſweet Sins; thoſe that are ſo hardned and naturaliz'd in their Vices, that if they were revived and brought again into this World of Temptations, would certainly return to the pleaſures of Sin; is it not righteous that their incorrigible obſtinacy ſhould be puniſh'd for ever? Is it not juſt that thoſe who would continue under the *dominion* of Sin, ſhould forfeit all their claim to the Divine Mercy?

Pænæ æqualitas non nude ſpectanda ut in ponderibus & menſuris, ſed expenſo propoſito, & voto ejus qui deliquit. *Grot.*

For if we conſider them as unrepentant and irreclaimable from their Wickedneſs, there are in them the juſt provocations and true cauſes of God's final rejection and hatred: and if we conſider God as revealed in his Word and Works, his eſſential Properties, Wiſdom, Purity, Juſtice, neceſſarily work upon ſuch Objects in ſuch a manner. How zealous an indignation did the Son of God expreſs againſt the obdurate Phariſees? *You Serpents, you Generation of Vipers, how ſhould you eſcape the damnation of Hell?* They in deſpite of all his Miracles, the equal Expreſſions of his Goodneſs and Power, reſiſted his Authority, blaſphemed his Perſon, and ſlighted his Salvation. Now tho' other Sins are of an inferior Nature, and weaker Evi-

*Mat.*23.33.

dence,

dence, yet Obſtinacy added to them, makes a Perſon unworthy and uncapable of Mercy. From hence the miſery of the Damned is without Redemption, without Hope, without Allay for ever.

2. I ſhall now proceed to conſider the Evidence of the Facts that is produc'd as the Reaſon of that Judgment.

The temper of Divine Juſtice is very obſervable in the particular Judgments recorded in Scripture. In the firſt proceſs of Juſtice on Earth, we read, that God made the enquiry of *Adam, Haſt thou eaten of the Tree whereof I commanded thee that thou ſhouldſt not eat?* and by palpable Evidence convinc'd him before he condemn'd him. Thus before the fiery Vengeance upon *Gen.*3.11.

the wicked Cities, the Memory of which will never be extinguiſh'd; The Lord ſaid to *Abraham*, *Becauſe the Cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and becauſe their Sin is grievous, I will go down now, and ſee whether they have done according to the Cry of it, that is come up unto me*: viz. whether they were ſo numerouſly and exceſſively wicked: *if not, I will know.* God is pleaſed to incarnate himſelf in Man's Expreſſion, to declare more ſenſibly to us, that he never puniſhes with precipitation, but after an equal trial of the Cauſe. Thus we read of that prophane King of *Babylon*, *Belſhazzer*, *That he was weighed in the Ballance, and found wanting*, before he was ſentenc'd to be deprived of his Kingdom and Life. And the deſtruction of the Antichriſtian State is attended with ſolemn

Gen. 18.20, 21.

Dan. 5.27.

lemn Halelujahs for the righteouſneſs of that Judgment. And in the laſt Day the Righteouſneſs of God's Proceedings ſhall be univerſally manifeſt and magnified. 'Tis therefore called *the Day of the Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God.* Now in order to this, the Scripture informs us, that all the Works of Men ſhall be brought in to Judgment, *even every ſecret thing, whether good or evil.* And the Apoſtle ſaith, *That we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the things done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*

Rev. 19. 2,3.

Rom. 2. 5.

Eccl. 12. *laſt.*

2 *Cor.* 5. 10.

All Sins, whether ſecret or openly viſible, ſhall be accounted for. Thoſe Sins that have been acted in the moſt ſecret Retirement, ſo that no eye of Man could take cognizance of them;

Nay, the Sins of the thoughts and affections, of which Satan could not accuſe Men, when the inward Fire of Luſt or Malice is not diſcovered by the leaſt ſmoke or ſparkles, by no expreſſions, all thoſe ſhall be brought to Judgment: *God will judg the Secrets of Men by Jeſus Chriſt.* *Rom.* 2. 16.

The ſins of Omiſſion of our Duty that are ſo numerous, from careleſneſs and diverſions, from ſlothfulneſs and delays, and that now ſo little affect us; for we are more ſenſible of what we do, than of what we have not done; the guilt of all theſe ſhall then be heavily charged on the *Conſcience* of the Sinner. The neglect of improving all the Means, Advantages, and Opportunities of doing or receiving Good, will be a great part of that Judgment. The Lord called his Servants to

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an account for the Talent committed to their truſt, and required profit in proportion to their number and worth.

All ſins of Commiſſion in *Youth* and *Age*, whether *groſs Senſuality, as Laſciviouſneſs, Luſts, exceſs of Wine, Revellings, Banquetings,* 1 *Pet.*4.5. *and abominable Idolatries, and all exceſs of Riot, ſhall be accounted for to him who is ready to judg the quick and the dead*: or acts of unrighteouſneſs to others. *He that doth wrong,* *Col.*3.25. *ſhall receive according to the wrong he has done.* And ſins of a leſſer guilt, for which the moſt are not touch'd with grief or ſhame, ſhall then be produc'd in Judgment. All the ſins of our words, ſo eaſily committed, and not ſo eaſily obſerved, ſhall then be called to a heavy remembrance. The Judg himſelf tells us; *I ſay unto* *Mat.*12.36. *you, that every idle word that Men ſhall*

ſpeak, they ſhall give account thereof in the Day of Judgment. And if, vain words, the Signs and immediate Effects of a vain Mind, ſhall ſadly encreaſe our Accounts, how much more all the contentious, fierce and revengeful words, the detracting, falſe, contumelious and injurious words, the impure, filthy, and contagious words, the prophane, blaſphemous, and impious words that *flow from the evil Treaſure of the Heart*? O their dreadful number, and oppreſſing weight!

And all the Aggravations and Circumſtances of Mens Sins, that raiſe their Guilt to ſuch fearful heights, ſhall be enumerated in order to Judgment. For thus *Jud.* 14, 15. 'twas foretold; *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them,*

them, of all their ungodly Deeds which they have ungodly committed; and all their hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him. And all the good Works of the Saints ſhall then be remembred, even to the leaſt work of Piety, the *giving of two Mites to the Treaſury of the Temple*; and the leaſt work of Charity, the *giving a cup of cold Water to a Diſciple*, upon the account of his Relation unto Chriſt. All their ſecret Graces and Duties ſhall then be rewarded. *Luk.*21.3,4. *Mat.*10.42.

The manner of this Judicial Evidence is ſet forth to us in Scripture, by *the opening the Books*; congruouſly to proceedings in humane Judgment, wherein the Information and Charge is produc'd from Writings for the conviction of the Accuſed. Thus it was repreſented to St. *John* in a Viſion;

Rev. 20. 12. Viſion; *I ſaw the Dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God; and the Books were opened, and the Dead were judged out of the things that were written in the Books, according to their Works.*

1. The Books of the Law and Goſpel ſhall then be open'd in all the Injunctions and Prohibitions, and our Lives compar'd with them. Our Saviour told the Jews, *Do not think that I will accuſe you to my Father, there is one that accuſeth you, even* Moſes, *in whom you truſt: not the Perſon, but the Law of* Moſes. And he denounced againſt thoſe that reject the Goſpel; the *Word that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judg them in the laſt Day.* The Law is the exact Tranſcript of God's Sacred Will, the natural and immutable Rule of Righteouſneſs; 'tis *pure*, forbids all Sin, and enjoyns univer-

John 5. 45.

John 12. 48.

univerſal Holineſs; 'tis Spiritual, requires not only a conformity in Words and Actions, but inward ſanctity in mind and heart: for the Soul is the principal part of Man, entirely open to God's Eye, the Maker and Judg of it. And the moſt enlightned Saints have but an imperfect knowledg of it here. This made Holy *David*, after his meditation upon its purity and perfection, to cry out in an Agony, *Who can underſtand his Errors! cleanſe thou me from ſecret ſins.* This when opend in its ſpiritual and comprehenſive Nature, by a wiſe and zealous Preacher, darts a Light into the Conſcience, and diſcovers many ſecret Sins, that like ſo many Serpents were ſtill and quiet in the dark; but upon the ſuddain breaking in of the Light, fly upon the Sinner, and tor-

Pſal. 19.

ment

ment him with their mortal Stings. But when the Law-giver himſelf ſhall expound the Law in its full extent and perfection, with reſpect to all the Duties it commands, and Sins it forbids, how guilty will Men appear? how unable to anſwer one Article of a thouſand charg'd upon them?

2. The Omniſcience of God will give moſt convincing Evi-
Heb. 4. 13. dence of all our Works. *All things are naked and open to his Eyes, with whom we have to do in Judgment.* The *Pſalmiſt* declares the infinite perſpicacity of his ſight: *The*
Pſal. 139. *Darkneſs hides not from thee, but the Night ſhines as the Day.* As his Light and tranſcendent Bright-
1 *Tim.* 6. 16. neſs is inviſible to us, ſo our thickeſt darkneſs is viſible to him. We cannot ſee things in the Night,

Night, becauſe it hinders the reception of the Rays, that inſinuate into the Eye and cauſes ſight: but the Eyes of our Judg are like *a flame of Fire*, diſpelling all darkneſs. *Rev.* 1. 14. From his Throne in Heaven, his piercing Eye ſees through all the concealments of Mens Sins. *Thou haſt ſet our Iniquities before thee, and our ſecret Sins in the Light of thy Countenance.* *Pſal.* 90. 8. He diſcovered the Sacrilege of *Achan*, the Lie of *Gehazi*, the Deceit of *Ananias*. *Saul's* diſobedience in ſparing the *Amalekites* devoted to deſtruction, had the colourable pretence of Piety, and, as a Sacrifice, was laid on the Altar. *1Sam.* 15. 21. And *David's* Murder of *Uriah* was imputed to the chance of War as a ſufficient excuſe. *2Sam.* 11. 25. But tho' they might have deceived others, they could not deceive God. He is intimately preſent with

with the Souls of Men, that are unſearchable to the moſt diſcerning Angels of Light, and knows all their moſt ſecret Deſigns and Deſires. The Phariſees in whom Pride was the firſt Property, and Hypocriſy a ſecond Nature, could not, with all their ſaintly ſhews, impoſe upon our Saviour: *for he knew what was in Man.* He diſcover'd their Alms to be not the effect of Charity but Oſtentation, and their ſpecious Acts of Devotion to be a train to ſurpriſe ſome rich Prey.

*Mat.*23.14.

*Mat.*6.2.

*Mat.*23.14.

And this Divine Knowledg of Men and their Actions is in order to Judgment. Thus the wiſe King declares, *Doth not he that ponders the Heart conſider it? and he that keepeth thy Soul, doth not he know it? And ſhall not he render to every Man according to his Works?* And God himſelf teſtifies, *I the Lord*

*Prov.*24.12.

*Jer.*17.10.

Lord ſearch the Heart, even to give to every Man according to his Works. For this Reaſon he is ſaid to keep a Regiſter of Mens Sins. Thus he ſpeaks of the impure Idolatries of the Jews; *Behold, it is written before me,* to ſignify his exact and actual knowledg, *I will not keep ſilence, but will recompenſe, even recompenſe into their Boſoms.* And at the Day of Judgment he will declare his Knowledg of their Sins before all, and the moſt ſecret ſhall be made evident, as if written in their Foreheads in the moſt plain and legible Characters. *Iſa.*65.6.

And all the goodneſs of the Saints ſhall then be revealed by the Judg. Their greateſt Excellencies are inviſible to the Eyes of Men: the ſanctity of their Aims and Affections, which gives Life and Value to all the Acts of

* O ſi nobis animam boni viri liceret inſpicere, quam pulchram faciem, quam ſanctam, quam ex magnifico, placidoque fulgentem videremus! *Senec.*

of Obedience, their ſecret Duties, wherein the ſincerity and ardency of their Souls is moſt expreſt, are only known to God. And ſuch is the excellent humility of the Saints, that the more they are enrich'd, and abound with the gracious influences of the Spirit, the leſs they diſcover to the World: as the Celeſtial Bodies, when in neareſt conjunction with the Sun, and moſt fill'd with his Light, are leaſt in appearance to the Inhabitants of the Earth. But there is a *Book of Remembrance before him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name. And they ſhall be mine, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, in the day when I make up my Jewels: and I will ſpare them as a Man ſpares his Son that ſerves him.*

Mal. 3. 16, 17.

3. The

3. The Conſcience of every Man ſhall then be open'd, and give an accuſing or excuſing teſtimony of all things: for theſe Acts of Conſcience in the preſent Life, have a final reſpect to God's Tribunal. And tho the Accounts are ſo vaſt, there ſhall be an exact agreement between the Books of God's Omniſcience and of Conſcience in the *Day of Judgment*. Now indeed the Conſcience of Man, tho never ſo inquiſitive and diligent in examining and reviſing his Ways, is unable to take a juſt account of his Sins. As one that would tell the firſt appearing Stars in the Evening, before he can reckon them, others appear and confound his Memory with their number: ſo when Conſcience is ſeriouſly intent in reflecting upon it ſelf, before it

Rom. 2. 15, 16.

can reckon up the Sins committed againſt one Command, innumerable others appear. This made the Pſalmiſt, upon the ſurvey of his Actions, break forth in amazement and perplexity; *Mine Iniquities are more than the*
*Pſal.*40.12. *Hairs upon my Head, therefore my Heart fails me.* But it will be one of the Miracles of that Day, to enlarge the view of Conſcience to all their Sins. And O the formidable ſpectacle, when Conſcience enlightned by a Beam from Heaven, ſhall preſent to a Sinner in one view the ſins of his whole Life! Now Conſcience is a Notary in every Man's Boſom; and tho 'tis not always vocal, yet writes down their Actions. *The*
*Jer.*17.1. *Sin of* Judah *is written with a Pen of* Iron, *and with a point of a Diamond 'tis graven upon the Tables of the Heart.* But then it ſhall be com-

compell'd to give a full Charge againſt the Guilty. Of this we have an infallible preſage in this world, when Conſcience turns the point againſt the Breſt of a Sinner, and enforces the Tongue, by a ſecret inſtigation to accuſe the Perſon. And this Information of Conſcience at the laſt will make the Sinner ſpeechleſs: for the Book of Accounts with Divine Juſtice, was always in his own keeping; and what-ever is recorded there, was written with his own hand. And how will thoſe hardned Sinners that now kick againſt the Pricks of Conſcience, be able to repel its ſtrong and quick Accuſations before that terrible Tribunal?

4. Other numerous Witneſſes will appear to finiſh the proceſs of that Day. Not as if God,

that knows all things, wants information, but for the publick conviction of the Wicked.

Satan will then bring a bloody Charge againſt them. Such is his Malignity, that he is a Complainer of God to Man, and by calumniating the Bleſſed Creator, ſeduc'd our firſt Parents; and he is the Accuſer of Men to God. He is ſtiled the *Accuſer of the Brethren before God day and night.* Some-

Rev.

times falſly, as when he taxed *Job*, that his Piety was mercenary; and often truly to provoke the Divine Diſpleaſure. But tho his Charge be juſt againſt them as Sinners, yet as Penitent Sinners they are abſolved by the Judg upon the Throne of Grace. This we have repreſented to the Prophet *Zechary*, Joſhua *the High Prieſt*, a Type of the Church,

Zech. 3. 1, 2, 3.

ſtanding before the Angel of the Lord,

and

and Satan ſtanding at his right hand to accuſe him; for that was the place of Accuſers. But Chriſt the Bleſſed Reconciler interpoſed. *And the Lord ſaid to Satan, the Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord that hath choſen* Jeruſalem *rebuke thee.* But he will principally act the part of an Accuſer at the Laſt Judgment. This is intimated in that fearful imprecation, *Let Satan ſtand at his right hand; When he is judged, let him be condemned.* He is now an active watchful Spirit, whoſe Diligence is equal to his Malice, and by glittering Snares, or violent Temptations, draws Men to ſin. But then he will be their moſt bitter Accuſer, not from zeal of Juſtice, but pure Malignity. Then he will aggravate their Crimes by the moſt killing Circumſtances; tho in accuſing *Pſ.* 109. 6, 7

them he endites himſelf, their ſins being uſually done by his ſollicitations.

And the Wicked themſelves will accuſe one another. In this World Fellow-ſinners uſually conceal one anothers Wickedneſs, reſtrain'd by their own obnoxiouſneſs. But then all that have been jointly engaged in the commiſſion of Sin, will impeach each other. The voluptuous Sinners that have excited one another to Luſt or Luxury; *Prov.* 7. 18. *Come let us take our fill of Love till the Morning*: *Isa.* 56. 12. *Come, I will fetch Wine, and we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong Drink, for to morrow ſhall be as to day, and much more abundant*: All the Charming Companions and Aſſociates will with fierceneſs charge one another. And the malicious cruel Sinners that ſay, *Come let us lay wait for* *Prov.* 1. *Blood*,

Blood, let us ſwallow them up quick as the Grave, will then like enraged Furies fly upon one another. In all Sins of Combination, the inferior Inſtruments will accuſe their Directors for their pernicious Counſel, and the Directors will accuſe the Inſtruments for their wicked Compliance.

And all the Holy Servants of God, who by their Inſtructions, Counſels, Admonitions, Examples have endeavoured to make the World better; eſpecially thoſe who by their Place and Relation were more concerned, and more zealouſly & compaſſionately urged and perſwaded thoſe under their Care to reform their Lives, and ſave their Souls, will give a heavy Teſtimony againſt them. Indeed the very preſence of the Saints will upbraid the

Wicked, for their reſiſting all the warming, melting Intreaties, all the grave and ſerious Reproofs, all the tender earneſt Expoſtulations, that were ineffectual by the hardneſs of their Hearts.

Briefly, the Scripture attributes to the Signs and Circumſtances of Mens ſins, a vocal Evidence againſt them. Thus the Prophet ſpeaking of the Houſe built by Rapine and Extortion, *The Stones of the Wall cry, and the Beams anſwer them*; and with concurrent teſtimony accuſe the unrighteous Builder. And *St. James* declares, That *the Wages of the Hireling, kept back by fraud, cry againſt the Oppreſſor. And the ruſt of Gold and Silver treaſured up, is a Witneſs againſt the Covetous.* And this by the recognition of Conſcience will be a Memorial againſt them hereafter.

Hab. 2. 11.

Jam. 5. 3, 4.

To

To what the Scripture ſpeaks of this kinde of Evidence of Mens ſins, I ſhall add a uſeful Repreſentation fram'd by a Heathen, to ſignify that wickedneſs, how ſecretly ſoever committed, ſhall be brought to light in Judgment. He tells us, that the Soul of a very guilty Wretch, was after Death arraigned before one of the ſevere Judges below. And at his Tryal, becauſe his atrocious Crimes were done in ſecret, he ſtood upon his defence, denying all. The Judg commanded his Lamp to be produc'd, that was an Eye Witneſs of his Wickedneſs. The Lamp appear'd, and being demanded what it knew of him, anſwered with a ſigh, Would I had been conſcious of nothing, for even now the remembrance of his Villanies makes me tremble. I wiſh

my

my Light had been extinguiſh'd, that the Oil that maintained, had quench'd it. But I burnt with diſdain, and caſt about ſome Sparks to fire his impure Bed, and was grieved that my little Flame was ſo weak as not to conſume it. I ſaid within my ſelf, If the Sun ſaw theſe Villanies, it would be eclips'd, and leave the World in Darkneſs. But I now perceive why I was conſtrain'd to give Light to him, that being a ſecret Spy of his Uncleanneſs, his Thefts and Cruelties, I might reveal them. But we that are enlightned by Faith, and know that God is Omnipreſent, and that what-ever Sin is done, tho' in the deepeſt and darkeſt receſs, is manifeſt to him, ‖ have no need of *Lucian*'s Lamp to make our Judg to be feared by us.

‖ Ipſe timendus eſt in publico, ipſe in ſecreto. Lucerna ardet? videt te. Lucerna extincta eſt? videt te. In cubile intras? videt te; in corde verſaris? videt te, Ipſum time.

3. The impartiality of the Sen-

Sentence will make the Juſtice of God conſpicuous before the whole World. This conſiſts in two things.

1. There will be no diſtinction of Perſons.

2. There will be a diſtinction of Cauſes in that Judgment; and according to their Nature, the Sentence will paſs upon all.

1. There will be no diſtinction of Perſons. In Humane Courts, the Judges ſometimes extend and amplify, ſometimes contract or ſmother the Evidence, and are more rigorous or favourable in their Sentence, as they are byaſt towards the Perſons before them. But the Righteous Judg of the World is uncapable of being inclin'd to favour or ſeverity upon ſuch baſe Motives. This is frequently declared in Scripture, to poſſeſs us

with

with his Fear. *If ye call upon the Father, who without respect of*
1 *Pet.*1.17. *Persons judges according to every Man's Work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* No spiritual Priviledges upon which Men are so apt to presume, *viz.* that they are Members of the Reformed Church; that they are enrich'd with excellent Gifts; that they enjoy the Ordinances in their purest Administration, will availe them without real Holiness in their hearts and lives. The being united to Societies of the most glorious Profession, of strictest Purity, and sublime Devotion, does no more prove one to be a real Saint, than the being of an eminent Company of Merchants proves one to be a rich Citizen. *Those that bow the Knee and not the Heart in faithful Reverence, that give the empty title of Lord to Christ,*

with-

without the tribute of Obedience, will be rejected by him. Many ſhall ſay at the Day of Judgment, Lord, Lord, we have prophe ſied in thy Name, and done many wonderous works. Then will the Judg ſay, I know you not: Depart from me ye workers of Iniquity. Mat. 7.22. No degrees of Civil Greatneſs will be of any moment and advantage in that day. St. *John* teſtifies, *I ſaw the Dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God*, in an equal Line, to receive their Trial. Kings ſhall then be deveſted of their Imperial Titles, of their Crowns and Scepters, and their Robes of State, and only be accompanied with their Works. Of this we have an undoubted Proof, in that they are no more exempted from the common Law of dying than the meaneſt Slave. Death, that rugged Officer arreſts them without Ceremony, and ſummons them

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to appear before that Tribunal. The Royal Purple could not protect *Herod* from being devoured by Worms. The Apostle speaks indefinitely in the forecited place; *He that does wrong,*
Col. 3. last. *shall receive for the wrong he has done; and there is no respect of Persons.* No circumstantial Accidents can derive true worth, or truly debase Persons, but inherent Qualities, and the Actions that flow from them: and accordingly, *the High and Holy God* will accept or disapprove them. What St. *Paul* observes of the saving Grace of the Gospel being indifferently offer'd to all, is applicable in this case. He tells us,
Col. 3. 11. *There is neither Greek nor Jew, Barbarian nor Scythian, Bond nor Free,* that are prefer'd or excluded upon a Carnal account, but that all may equally partake of Spiritual

ritual Bleſſings. Thus the difference of Nations will be no Priviledg or Prejudice to any in the Day of Judgment. The moſt rude and contemptible ſhall have as fair and equal a Trial, as the moſt polite and civiliz'd. The ignorant *Barbarians*, as the Learned *Grecians*, that ſo much boaſted of their vain Excellencies above them. The *Negroes* in *Africa*, as the People of *Europe*: for they have the ſame Relation to God their Maker, and as truly bear the impreſſion of God ſtamped upon the Humane Nature in the Creation, and therefore common to the whole ſpecies of Mankind: An Image may be faſhion'd in Ebony, as well as in Ivory. Briefly, all Men are equally ſubject to his Laws, and ſhall be equally accountable for their Actions. *The Rich and*

the

the Poor ſhall then meet together, without diſtinction, before God the Maker and Judg of them all.

2. There ſhall be a diſtinction of Cauſes, and every Man be judged *according to his Works*, the tenor of good Works, and the deſert of bad. The Apoſtle aſ-

Gal. 6. 7, 8. ſures us, *That whatſoever a Man ſows, that ſhall he reap: He that ſoweth to the Fleſh, ſhall of the Fleſh reap Corruption: But he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap Life everlaſting.* The Harveſt ſhall be according to the Seed, both in kind and meaſure.

Rom. 2. 7. 1. *Thoſe who by patient continuance in well-doing, ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Imortality,* ſhall

Rom. 6. *laſt.* obtain *eternal Life.* Indeed, *eternal Life* is *the Gift of infinite bounty,*

Jude 21. nay of *pure Mercy*, and Mercy excludes Merit. 'Tis ſaid of the Bleſſed Martyrs, who contended for

for the Truth and Purity of the Goſpel to the Death, that *their Robes were waſh'd white in the Blood of the Lamb*, not in their own Blood? Their right to Heaven was from the application of his Merits to them. But the Reward is diſpens'd from God according to the Evangelical Law; not only as a Magnificent Prince, but as *a Righteous Judge*. All thoſe whom the Goſpel ordains to Eternal Life, ſhall infallibly obtain it, and none that the Goſpel excludes. Thoſe who were ſenſible of their Sins, and cordially forſaking them, did humbly and entirely depend upon the Grace of God, through the Bleſſed Reconciler and Saviour, ſhall be juſtified and glorified. Then the Judg will diſcern between unfeigned Faith and vain Preſumption, and *Rev.* 7. 14.

will juſtify the Faith of the Saints by the genuine Fruits of it, *the Godlineſs, Righteouſneſs, and Sobriety of their Lives*, and a victorious perſeverance in their Duty, notwithſtanding all the pleaſing Temptations or Tortures to withdraw them from it. Thus the Apoſtle expreſſes his humble confidence; *I have fought the good Fight, I have finiſh'd my Courſe, henceforth there is laid up for me the Crown of Righteouſneſs, which God the Righteous Judg will give me at that day: and not only to me, but to all that love his appearance.* We read in the Deſcription of the Laſt Judgment, That *the Book of Life was opened: the Names of all that were written in Heaven*, ſhall then be declared, that it may appear they are *ſaved by Grace*. For it was his moſt free pleaſure to ſelect ſome from the common

2 *Tim.* 4. 7, 8.

Rev. 20. 12.

common Maſs of Perdition, who were naturally as guilty and corrupted as others, and to predeſtinate them to Eternal Glory, and effectual perſevering Grace to prepare them for it. *The Saints are created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained,* that *they ſhould walk in them.* And the New Creation is as undeſerved and entire an Effect of God's Love as the firſt was. But 'tis ſaid, *That every Man was judged according to his Works.* For Eternal Election does not entitle a Perſon immediately to Heaven, but according to the order eſtabliſh'd in the Goſpel. Thus the King at the laſt Day ſpeaks to the Elect; *Come, ye Bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom, prepared for you before the foundation of the World: for I was hungry, and ye fed me; naked, and ye clothed me.* *Mat.* 15. 34, 35.

And according as the Saints have excell'd in Fidelity and Zeal in God's Service, they ſhall be rewarded with a more excellent Glory. The Stars of Paradiſe are of a different brightneſs and greatneſs, as the Stars of the Firmament. Indeed all are perfectly happy, without * jealouſie, that any is equal or ſuperior to them in that Kingdom. But God will crown his own Graces as the Saints have improved them. Our Saviour valued the Widows two Mites, as tranſcending all the magnificent Gifts of others; becauſe of the degrees of Love in the giver. There was a richer Mine of affection in her Heart, Gold of a more noble Vein, more pure and precious than all their Riches. This was of greater price in God's account, who weighs the Spirits in his

* Plus amant illud Regnum in quo non timent habere conſortes. *Aug.* de Civit. Dei.

his Ballance. God *will accept and reward according to what a Man has, and not according to what he has not.* 2 *Cor.*8.12. He that improves but two Talents with his beſt skill and diligence, ſhall have a greater Reward than another that had ten Talents, and was remiſs and leſs careful to employ them for his Maſter's profit. The Rule will be exactly obſerved, *He that ſows bountifully, ſhall reap bountifully; and he that ſows ſparingly, ſhall reap ſparingly.*

And if God will be thus impartial in rewarding the Saints, much more in puniſhing the Wicked. For the remuneration of our Duty is the effect of his moſt free Favour; but the recompences of Sin are due, and decreed by Juſtice, in Number, Weight, and Meaſure. The ſeverity of the ſence will be in pro-

portion, as Mens Sins have been more numerous and heinous. Altho' all the Damned ſhall be equally miſerable in diſpair, all broken on an endleſs Wheel, yet the degrees of their Torment are different. Sins of Ignorance are extenuated in compariſon of Rebellious Sins againſt knowledge. The firſt are like a Servant's daſhing againſt his Maſter in the dark; the other like the inſolent ſtriking of him in the light: And as they incur greater Guilt, will expoſe to greater Puniſhment. Accordingly our Saviour predicts, that *the Servant which knew his Lord's Will, and prepared not himſelf, neither did according to his Will, ſhall be beaten with many ſtripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of ſtripes, ſhall be beaten with few ſtripes.* Unactive Knowledge is worſe than Ignorance. For this reaſon

Luke 12. 47, 48.

reaſon the caſe of *Heathens* wil be more tolerable than of the Jews: for tho' ſome natural Principles were ſtrong and quick in their minds, that made them ſenſible of their duty and danger, yet they were not ſo clear and perfect as the Law delivered by *Moſes*. Thoſe Sins that were infirmities in a Pagan, were preſumptuous in a Jew. And the caſe of the *Jews* will be more tolerable than of diſobedient *Chriſtians*, who enjoy the Goſpel leſs charged with Ceremonies, and more abundant in Grace than the Moſaical Diſpenſation. Thoſe that have ſet before them the Life of Chriſt, the Model of all Perfection, that are excited by ſuch lowd Calls *to flee from the Wrath to come*, and yet are deaf and regardleſs to the Commands, nay to the melting Invitations and precious Promiſes of

the Goſpel, ſhall have a more intolerable Judgment than the moſt guilty Sinners, even the Sodomites and Sidonians that were ſtrangers to it. The precious Blood of the Son of God deſpiſed, induces a Crimſon Guilt. And as Sins are committed with pride and pleaſure, with eager appetite and obſtinacy, the revenge of Juſtice will be more heavy upon Perſons.

More particularly, Sins of conſequence, whereby others are drawn to Sin, will heighten the Guilt, and the retribution of Juſtice will be to every Man *according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

Jer. 17. 10.

This will principally concern Superiours in eminency of place, whoſe dignity has always a concomitant proportion of Duty. Their vicious Actions are Examples, and their Examples more power-

powerful Rules than their Laws, and give countenance to others to ſin licentiouſly. They *ſin with an high Hand*, and involve the ruine of innumerable perſons that depend upon them. As the Dragon in the *Revelation*, whoſe fall from Heaven drew a train of leſſer Stars with him. And all inferiour Magiſtrates, who by perſonal commiſſion, or partial connivance, encourage and harden others in Sin, and by their power diſcountenance ſerious Religion, and obſtruct the progreſs of it, heap up Damnation to themſelves.

And the Miniſters of the Word, who are obliged *to watch for the Souls of Men*; and ſhould, like the Heavens, by their light, influence, and motion, their Doctrine and Lives, guide and quicken others in the ways of Holineſs, if by their neg-

neglect and wickedneſs others are loſt for ever, their Account will be moſt heavy and undoing.

Of this number are thoſe, who by their unholy Converſation weaken the Authority and Efficacy of the Word, and more ſucceſsfully perſwade Men to do Evil, than by their Preaching to do well: for we are apt to take deeper impreſſion through the eye than through the ear, and to follow the Phyſician's Practice rather than his Counſel. Theſe *periſh not alone in their Iniquity.* And ſuch who are unfaithful Diſpenſers of the Treaſures of their Lord, and by looſe Doctrines corrupt the Minds of Men, to fancy a Mercy in God derogatory to his Holineſs, that altho they live indulgently in Sin, they may obtain an eaſy Pardon and Happineſs at laſt. And ſuch who em-

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ploy their high Commiſſion for low and baſe ends: Thoſe who inſtead of *preaching Jeſus Chriſt, and him crucified*, the pure and ſaving Truths, derived from the Fountain of the Goſpel, entertain their hearers with flaſhy Conceits, and ſtudied Vanities, to give a reliſh to Curioſity, and to have the applauſe of Fools, and obſcure the native Majeſty of the Word, enervate its force, and render it powerleſs to Conſcience.

And thoſe who ſpend their zeal in things of no moment to Salvation, and let fly bitter Invectives againſt thoſe that diſſent from them in unconcerning Matters, by which they harden Atheiſtical Scorners in vilifying the Office of the Miniſtry as a *Carnal Invention*, ſet up and uſed for Secular ends; and induce others to place Religion in Formalities and ſlight colours

lours of it, as if Conformity to needleſs Rites would exclude the defects of ſubſtantial Holineſs.

'Tis obſerv'd in the Chaldee-Paraphraſe, when God was inquiring of *Cain* concerning *Abel*, that he charges him, *The voice of thy Brother's Bloods cries unto me.* As if *Cain* were a Murderer not of a ſingle Man only, but of a numerous Race that might have deſcended from his Brother. Thus a wicked Miniſter will be charg'd not only for murdering himſelf, but as many precious Souls as might have been converted and ſaved, if he had faithfully performed his Duty.

And Parents that ſhould inſtil the Principles of Godlineſs into their Children in their early age, and ſeaſon their minds with the knowledge of the Divine Laws, to regulate their Lives, and make them

them ſenſible of their Obligations to obey them, that ſhould recommend Religion to their Affections by an holy and heavenly Converſation, if by the neglect of their Duty their Children are expoſed as a prey to the Tempter, and ruin'd for ever, it will enhance their laſt Reckoning, and encreaſe the ſcore of their Guilts beyond expreſſion.

And Maſters of Families, and all others that have authority and advantage to preſerve or reform from evil thoſe that are committed to their Care, and to inſtruct and command them to do what is pleaſing to God and profitable to their Souls, will be ſadly accountable for thoſe that periſh by their neglect.

In ſhort, we ſee by common experience, that Company and mutual Conſent is a uſual Motive

to

to Sin; and many perſons that alone would with abhorrence reject ſome Temptations, yet are ſociably ſinful. Now all thoſe who by excitation or example, lead others to deſtruction, as they are firſt in Sin, will be chief in the Puniſhment. We reade in the Parable of the rich Voluptuary, that being in Hell, he deſired a Meſſenger might be diſpatch'd from the Dead to warn his Brethren, leſt they ſhould come to that place of Torment. Is there ſuch Charity in Hell to the Souls of others? ‖ No, that Furnace always burns with its proper flames, there is not a ſpark of that Divine Fire there. But remembring how guilty he had been of their Sins, feared that his Torments would be encreaſed by their coming thither. Society in endleſs Sorrows does not divide but reflect them.

Luke 16.28.

‖ *Non orat pro fratrum ſalute qua non tangitur reprobus, ſed pro ſe ne ipſius tormenta ex conſortio fratrum augeantur.* Brugen.

Now

Now if Damnation for Sin be ſuch a Miſery as is expreſt in the Scripture by the moſt violent Figures and words of the heavieſt ſignification; if all the poſſible Tortures ſuffered here are but a Lenitive to the preparations of Wrath in Hell, how miſerable ſhall thoſe be, who, as if a ſingle Damnation were a light matter, do not only commit Sin in their own perſons, but are in combination with Satan to corrupt and deſtroy others, and multiply the ſentences of Damnation againſt themſelves? Theſe *treaſure up Wrath againſt the day of Wrath.*

Briefly, the whole Proceſs of that Day, the Arraignment and Sentence are ſo ordered, as to clear the Judge, and confound the Guilty. *God will be juſtified in his Sentence, and overcome when he judgeth.*

I ſhall now come to apply this great Doctrine.

1. Let us from what has been diſcours'd of Judgment to come, be excited to confirm our Faith in this great and uſeful Doctrine; and by ſerious and frequent thoughts to apply it to our ſelves. Some within the Church have only a ſuperficial belief of this, as a point of the Religion wherein they were educated, but carnal Affections, Fear, Hope, Love, and Deſire, controul their Aſſent, as to its operation upon them. They believe in the general that God is the Judge and Rewarder of our Actions, and in the abſence of temptation reſolve to obey him: but when a ſtrong Tryal comes from ſome temporal Good or Evil that is preſent, their Faith is negligent, and unactive to keep them from Sin. Now to make

our

our Faith powerful, we muſt,

Firſt, confirm it by convincing Arguments, that it may be an undoubted Aſſurance, a certain Light, directive and perſwaſive in the courſe of our Lives. Some Doctrines of Religion, that are of an incomprehenſible nature, and ſhould be received with ſilent adoration for the Authority of the Revealer, are obſtinately contradicted by ſome, upon a vain pretence that nothing is to be believed that will not endure the rigorous inquiſition of Reaſon, and be comprehended by our narrow Minds: but Reaſon, tho darkned, ſees the neceſſity of a future Judgment. Nature and Scripture teſtify there is a God, and that he has a Right, and Power, and Will to diſtribute the rewards of Vertue, and the penalties of Vice to his Subjects. To deny this, is

directly againſt the implanted Notion of the Deity in the heart. There is a real difference between Moral Good and Evil, not depending upon Opinion, but ariſing from the immutable nature of things, and the eternal Law of God. Otherwiſe, conſidered in it ſelf, it were no more faulty to murder a Parent, than to kill a Fly; nor to rob a Travellor, than to chaſe a Deer. But the Conſcience of the moſt profligate wretch would ſtartle at ſuch an Aſſertion. The diſpoſition and admirable order of the World in its various parts, and the viciſſitude of Seaſons, declare to the obſerving Mind, that a moſt wiſe, good, and powerful God governs and preſerves all things by his vigorous Influence. And can it be that the Divine Providence, ſo viſibly wiſe and good in regulating the courſe

course of Nature, should be defective towards Man, the most noble part of the World? And can it be extended to humane affairs, if there be no other than the present state, wherein the Righteous are afflicted, and the Wicked prosper? where Sins of the deepest stain and the lowdest cry are unpunish'd, and the sublime and truly heroick Vertues are unrewarded? nay, where Vice receives the natural reward of Vertue, Honour and Felicity, and Vertue the just wages of Vice, Disgrace and Sufferings. 'Tis necessary therefore that there be a future state, and a righteous distribution of rewards, according to the good and evil of Men's Actions here.

The Heathens disguised this terrible Truth under the Fictions of the Infernal Judges, *Minos*, and *Rhadamanthus*, and *Eacus*. And the

Teſtimonium animæ naturaliter Chriſtiana. Tert.

Furies and Vultures, and fiery Lake, which they thought tormented the Wicked in the next World, diſcover what apprehenſions they had of the deſert of Sin, and the puniſhment that certainly attended it. The Guilty would fain be freed from the terrours of it, and ſtrangle Conſcience, that is bound over to give Teſtimony in the Day of Judgment, that they may ſin without ſcruples. But tho Fear be a troubleſom and involuntary Paſſion, they cannot totally extinguiſh the internal ſenſe and preſages of future Judgment; but as the motions of Courage came upon *Sampſon* at times; ſo Conſcience awakened by ſharp Afflictions, by ſudden Dangers, and the approaches of Death, makes a ſad deduction of paſt Sins, and foreca ſts cruel things. It cites the Offen-

Offender before the enlightened Tribunal of Heaven, ſcourges with remorſe, and makes him feel even here the ſtrokes of Hell. Tho' the Sin be ſecret, and the guilty Perſon powerful, not within the cognizance or reach of humane Juſtice, yet Conſcience has a Rack within, and cauſes pain and anxiety, by fearful expectations of Judgment to come.

And Divine Revelation is moſt expreſs in declaring this great Truth. The Light of Faith is more clear and certain from the infallible Word of God, than the Light of Reaſon. Before the Flood, *Enoch* in the early Age of the World foretold it; *Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thouſand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all.* *Jude* 14, 15.

Solomon under the Law repeats this Doctrine, that *every ſecret thing ſhall be brought into Judgment,* *Eccleſ.* 12.

whether good or evil. And God himſelf ſpeaks in the ſublimeſt ſtile of Majeſty, and ſwears by himſelf, for our firmer belief, *As I live, ſaith the Lord, every Knee ſhall bow to me, and every Tongue confeſs to God,* the glory of his Juſtice. From whence the Apoſtle infers, *ſo then every one of us ſhall give an account to God for himſelf.* In the Goſpel we have diſtinctly deſcribed the Perſon of the Judge, the glorious Attendants of his Coming, and the manner of his proceedings in that Day. Now the many Predictions in Scripture ſo viſibly accompliſh'd in the Perſon of Jeſus Chriſt, and by him, give infallible aſſurance, that all his Promiſes and Threatnings are equally certain, and ſhall be fulfilled. As ſure as our Saviour is come in his humble ſtate, and has accompliſh'd the Prophecies of his

Iſa. 45. 23.

Rom. 14. 10, 11.

Mat. 13. 42, 43. & 23. 30, 31.

An verè extribuit nobis omnia quæ promiſit, & de ſclo die judicii nos fefellit? Aug.

his Sufferings, he will come in his Glory to judg the World.

2. That the belief of eternal Judgment may be powerful in our hearts and lives, it muſt be actuated by frequent and ſerious thoughts. Faith gives life and efficacy to our notions of eternal things, and Conſideration makes our Faith effectual. As the natural Life is preſerved by the activity of the vital Principles, the Circulation of the Blood, the drawing of the Breath, the motion of the Pulſe; ſo the ſpiritual Life is maintained by the exerciſe of Grace. The carnal Affections dare not appear before Reaſon and Conſcience, when awakened by the ſerious believing Conſideration of eternal Judgment. The Evangeliſts relate, that when our Saviour was aſleep in the Ship, a ſudden Tempeſt aroſe that was

likely to over-ſet it in the Sea: but awakened by the cry of his Diſciples, *Lord, ſave us, we periſh; he preſently rebuked the Wind, and a Calm enſued.* Thus whilſt the habit of Faith is aſleep in the Soul, there will be great danger from the concurrent violence of Temptations and Corruptions; but when 'tis awakened by lively and powerful thoughts, it does Miracles in ſubduing the ſtrongeſt Luſts. 'Tis monſtrous and beyond all belief, did not ſenſible experience make it evident, that notwithſtanding the minds of Men are convinc'd of the certainty of the Divine Judgment, and the Recompenſes that immediatly follow, yet their Wills remain unconverted, and their Affections cold and unactive in their preparations for it: That ſuch numbers who have ſo much Chriſtia-

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nity as to believe that an irrevocable Doom will paſs upon the Wicked, and ſo little Chriſtianity, that they cannot juſtly hope to eſcape from it, yet are ſo careleſs of their Duty, nay joyful in their ſinful courſes, as if Judgment were a dreadleſs thing. What is the cauſe of this prodigious ſecurity? 'Tis the neglect of conſidering, that *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, to receive according to the things done in the body, whether good or evil.*

Their ſenſes and faculties are ſo imployed abroad in the World, they have neither leiſure nor deſire to think ſeriouſly of it. Their hearts are ſo raviſht with dreams of ſenſuality, and engaged in terrene affairs, that they are very averſe from exerciſing their minds upon ſuch diſpleaſing objects.

I have read of an excellent Preacher,

Preacher, that in a Sermon deſcribed the laſt Judgment in all its Terrors, with ſuch ardent expreſſions, and thoſe animated with ſuch an affecting Voice, ſuch an inflamed Countenance and Action, that his Hearers broke forth into paſſionate Crys, as if the Judg himſelf had been preſent to paſs the final Sentence upon them. In the heighth of their Commotion the Preacher bid them ſtop their tears and paſſions, for he had one thing more to add, the moſt afflicting and aſtoniſhing Conſideration of all the reſt, That within leſs than a quarter of an hour, the memory and regard of that which ſo tranſported them would vaniſh, and their affections return to carnal objects in their uſual manner.

The neglect of Conſideration makes even the Doctrin of Judgment

ment to come to be without efficacy. 'Tis necessary therefore that the belief of this be so firmly seated in the Heart as its Throne, that it may comand the thoughts to be very attentive to it, and may have Regal power over our wills and affections, that our lives may be ordered according to its Rules.

2. The Consideration of Eternal Judgment will vindicate the Proceedings of Divine Providence, and the honour of God's governing this World, from the imputations of Unrighteousness. God is provoked every day, yet spares the Wicked, and heaps an abundance of Favours on them. His Patience and Goodness they prophanely abuse, and become more obdurate and inflexible. They are apt to blaspheme the Excellency of his Nature in their Hearts, thinking that he is ignorant Psal. 14. 1.

rant or careleſs, impotent or unjuſt. They implicitly deny his Providence and Judgment, that he does not obſerve their Sins, and will not require an account for them. Or elſe they interpret his Permiſſion to be an Approbation of their Sins. *Theſe things haſt*
Pſal. 50. *thou done, and I kept ſilence, thou thoughteſt I was ſuch an one as thy ſelf.* Thus the Heathens tranſplanted the Vices of Earth to Heaven, and repreſented their Gods to be ſenſual, jealous, furious as Men, and accordingly expected an eaſy Abſolution for their Sins. Or elſe the diſtance of Judgment to come ſo hardens them, that they hear God's Thunder with leſs fear, than Boys do their Squibs and Crackers. *Be-*
Eccl. 8. 2. *cauſe Sentence againſt an evil Work is not ſpeedily executed, therefore the hearts of the Sons of Men are fully*

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ſet in them to do evil. But how deſperate is the madneſs of Sinners? God now *ſeems to wink at their Sins,* Acts 17. 30. but hath appointed a day of Accounts. He ſuffers them to live in proſperity, *but they are reſerved* 2 Pet. 2. 4. *to the day of Judgment to be puniſh'd,* and poſſibly ſooner: for ſometimes they are cut off by viſible vengeance, to convince the World that the ſupream Judg does not *bear the Sword in vain.* But tho 'tis delayed for a time, yet he declares, that *their Sins are laid up in* Deut. 32. 34 *ſtore with him, and ſealed up among his Treaſures. To him belongs Vengeance and Recompence.* He is a mild Judge now, and his Clemency ſuſpends their Puniſhment; but ‖ Juſtice will not forget it. He threatens the ſecure Sinner, *I will* ‖ Amos 8. 7. Pſal. 50. 21. *reprove thee, and ſet thy Sins in order before thine eyes.* How will the ſcornful obſtinate Sinner change com-

complexion & tremble, when an Army of Sins more terrible than ſo many Furies, ſhall be ranged in Battel, and with fiery Darts wound his naked Soul? How will the ſtubborn Atheiſt, that pleaſes himſelf with vain imaginations of the Eternity of the World, and the Mortality of the Soul, be confounded when he feels the truth of Scripture-threatnings, to his eternal ſorrow? then all their Ralleries will be turn'd into Lamentations. 'Tis not for *want of power that God ſpares the Wicked, but becauſe they are alwayes in his hands, and he can make them as miſerable as they are ſinful when he pleaſes. 'Tis not through the neglect of Juſtice, but for moſt wiſe and holy Reaſons, as ſhall appear in the laſt day, when a deciſive irreverſible Judgment ſhall be pronounc'd

Cum habeat in poteſtate vindictam mavult diu tenere patientiam. Cyprian. *de bon. Patient.*

pronounc'd, and immediately in-inflicted upon them before the World. When an Actor at *Athens* ſpoke with Admiration of Riches, as the moſt valuable Acquiſition, and of the Felicity of Rich Men: the People were in an Uproar at the immorality of the Speech, and were ready to chaſe him from the Stage. But the Poet himſelf appeared, and deſired them to ſtop their Fury till they ſaw the *Cataſtrophe*, the wretched end of that ſordid Miſer. Thus we are apt to accuſe the ways of God when the Wicked flouriſh; but we ſhould ſtop our tumultuous thoughts, for their end will abſolve Divine Providence from all undue reflections upon the account of their temporal happineſs.

And the ſound belief of this will rectify all miſtaking apprehenſions,

Ὦ χρύσε δεξίωμα κάλλιστον βρότοις, &c. *Cum hi noviſſimi verſus in Tragœdia* Euripidis *pronuntiati eſſent, totus populus ad ejiciendum & Actorem & Carmen conſurrexit uno impetu: donec* Euripides *in medium proſiluit petens ut expectarent, viderentque quem admirator auri exitum faceret.* Senec. *Epiſt.* 115.

henſions, and clear all perplexing appearances about the Sufferings of the Righteous here.

Indeed if we conſider the holieſt Men as they are Sinners, their Afflictions are ſo far from blemiſhing the Juſtice of God, that they are the ſigns of his Mercy: for all is a Favour on this ſide Hell to thoſe that deſerve it. *David* an excellent Saint, acknowledges the righteouſneſs of God's Judgments with reſpect to himſelf. But when the Saints ſuffer for a righteous Cauſe, and, as the Pſalmiſt expreſſes it, *for thy ſake are we killed all the day long, and are counted as Sheep for the ſlaughter*; there is not a viſible correſpondency between the Providence of God in his governing the World, and the unchangeable Rules of Juſtice, that thoſe who do evil ſhould ſuffer evil, and thoſe who

Pſal. 44.

do

do well ſhould be happy. As the Apoſtle ſpeaks to the perſecuted Chriſtians, *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled reſt with us.* Now there is a day coming, when the Perſecutors ſhall be puniſh'd, and the Saints be rewarded for all their Sufferings, and the diſtribution of Recompences ſhall be in the preſence of the World, for the glory of Divine Juſtice. For the diſtinction that is made between Men at Death is private and particular, and not ſufficient for the honour of God's Government. But at the laſt Day all Men that have lived in ſeveral ſucceſſions of Ages ſhall appear, and Juſtice have a ſolemn Proceſs and Triumph before Angels and Men. As ſome excellent Piece that is to be expos'd to publick view, is co-

2 Theſſ. 6. 7.

vered with a Traverſe, to prevent the diſturbance in the working, and the diſcovery of the Work till brought to ſuch perfection as will ſurpriſe with wonder thoſe that ſee it: So God is pleaſed to cover his proceedings for a time, but in the laſt day there will be

Rom. 2. 7. *ſuch a Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, that thoſe who now doubt, or complain of his Juſtice, ſhall admire and adore it.

3. The belief of this Doctrine as it vindicates Divine Providence, ſo 'tis powerful to comfort the Saints under Perſecutions for Righteouſneſs ſake; eſpecially when Innocence is wounded with ſlanderous Darts, and Calumnies are joyned with Cruelties, repreſenting them as worthy of publick hatred. It was one of the Subtile Artifices of *Julian* the

the Apoſtate, to mingle the Images of the Heathen Gods with thoſe of the Emperours, that the doing reverence (as the Chriſtians were commanded) to all together, might imply a dereliction and renouncing of their Religion, and their Simplicity ſeem Impiety: or if, jealous of ſlipping from their profeſſion, they refuſed to do it, they might ſeem to deny the expreſſions of honour due to their Emperours, and be reputed to ſuffer not as Chriſtian Martyrs, but as Rebels. But the believing Conſideration of God's righteous Judgment will make them deſpiſe the Cenſures & Reproaches of malicious Adverſaries. *With me*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *it is a very ſmall thing that I ſhould be judged by Man's Judgment; he that judgeth me is the Lord.* The ſevereſt Cenſure was of no more weight compar'd

1 Cor. 4. 3.

with the approbation of God, than the lighteſt Feather that flies in the Air, put in the Scales againſt the Globe of the Earth. The aſſurance of a righteous Cauſe, and a righteous Judg, will preſerve an inward and joyful tranquillity of Soul in the midſt of all the Storms of Reproach and Scandalous Imputations; like the calmneſs of a Haven when the Sea is tempeſtuous without. And this will fortify Believers to bear with an invincible courage all the violence that is offered to them for their fidelity to God. All the wrongs and injuries they endure, ſhall be redreſt with infinite advantage. The extreameſt Evils to which they are expoſed for Chriſt, are like the Chariots of Fire ſent from God, not to conſume but conduct *Elias* in triumph into the higheſt Heaven. God will give them preſent

Inter Judicem juſtum, & conſcientiam tuam, noli timere niſi cauſam tuam. Aug.

preſent Support, inward Conſolations, and a future Crown. There is an appointed day when oppreſſed Innocence ſhall obtain the nobleſt Victory, and diſgraced Godlineſs the moſt publick and higheſt Honour. *The Faith of ſincere Chriſtians ſhall be found to praiſe and glory.* 1 Pet. 1. 7. They may ſuffer under the tyranny of Time, but ſhall reign in the Kingdom of Eternity. The belief of this, when firmly radicated in the heart, is ſo powerful as to make them *glory in the ſharpeſt Tribulations*, and joyfully triumph over Satan, with his perverted malignant World. *Cantando rumpitur Anguis.* But alas, the Sin, and a great part of the trouble of the Saints, ariſes from their weakneſs of Faith, and not patient waiting for the Day of the Lord. When heavy Perſecutions and great Diſtreſſes are

continued by the reſtleſs Adverſaries, they are apt through impatience and inſtability of mind, to be full of ſorrowful Complaints that God delayes their particular Deliverance. And as ſometimes the Clock out-runs the motion of the Sun, that is the true meaſure of Time; ſo their haſty deſires prevent the *eternal Counſel of his Will*, that has determined the period of the Miſeries of his People, and of the Proſperity of the Wicked in the fitteſt time. And that he ſuſpends his glorious Coming to judg the World in Righteouſneſs, diſcourageth weaker Chriſtians, and makes them ready to faint *in the day of Adverſity. But the Lord is not ſlack in performing his Promiſe, as Men count ſlackneſs.* There is not the leaſt reaſon to queſtion his Fidelity and Power, or to ſuſpect his Love and Remembrance

2 Pet. 3.9.

of

of his People. And as the Stars of Heaven enlighten the Earth, but the Candles on Earth cannot enlighten the Heavens: ſo the Wiſdom of God's Counſel and Providence ſhould direct us patiently to expect his appointed time, but our glimmering reaſon cannot direct him.

4. The ſerious belief of future Judgment is the moſt effectual reſtraint from ſecret Sins. Men are apt to encourage themſelves in evil upon the account of ſecrecy: 'tis the uſual tinder of Temptations. If ſolitude and ſilence, if the darkneſs of the night, or any diſguiſes may conceal their Wickedneſs from humane Eyes, they are bold and ſecure as to God. The Pſalmiſt declares what is the inward principle that acts them, what is the language of their hearts: *All the workers of Iniquity* Pſal. 94. 5. 6.

quity boaſt themſelves, they ſay, The Lord ſhall not ſee, neither ſhall the God of Jacob *regard it.* But O the bruti∫h folly of Men, to think, that becauſe they do not ſee God, that he does not ſee them. As if one ſhould ſhut his Eyes in the face of the Sun, and do ſome foul abominable thing, thinking himſelf to be unſeen, becauſe he ſees no perſon. How vain is the impure diligence of the Adulterer, the crafty diligence of the Deceiver, the ſollicitous diligence of other Sinners to hide things from the Judge of all? *Shall not God ſearch it out, for he knows the very ſecrets of the heart?* What a confounding diſcovery will be made of ſecret Wickedneſs at the laſt day? Here obſcurity is the mask of Shame that conceals it from the World. Or if only Children and Fools that are not capable to

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judg of the indecency and turpitude of Actions, be Spectators, Men are not touch'd with ſhame for foul things. But then their Wickedneſs ſhall be diſplayed before God, the holy Angels and Saints. The actual belief of this would deprive Satan of one of his greateſt Advantages, and be a bleſſed Preſervative from many Sins that allure the conſent by the temptation of ſecrecy. A conſidering Chriſtian will reject them with indignation, ſaying with *Joſeph, How can I do this great Wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God?* The Sins undiſcovered and unpuniſh'd by temporal Tribunals, ſhall then receive a juſt recompence.

5. The remembrance of that ſtrict Judgment, is the moſt natural and powerful remedy againſt ſenſual Temptations that ſo eaſily inſinuate and engage the hearts

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of Men. S. Peter reckoning up
1 Pet. 4. 3, 4. the Heathen Sins, *Laſciviouſneſs, Luſts, exceſs of Wine, Revellings*, and *abominable Idolatries*, tells the Chriſtians, *that the Gentiles thought it ſtrange that they did not run with them to the ſame exceſs of riot.* As the Diſciples when our Saviour walkt upon the Waters, thought he had been a Spirit, judging that no real Body could tread on them without ſinking: thus Men are apt to think it impoſſible to reſtrain their carnal appetites when allured by pleaſing objects. But the belief of the Terrors of the Lord, will damp the ſenſual affections when moſt ſtrongly enclin'd to forbidden things, and extinguiſh delight in Sin: for delight and fear are inconſiſtent. Therefore the wiſe Preacher gives this Counſel,
Eccleſ. 11. *Rejoice O young Man in thy youth, and let thy heart chear thee in the days of thy*

thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and ſight of thine eyes: but know thou for all theſe things God will bring thee to Judgment. This will change the apprehenſions of the mind, and alter the taſte of the appetite, and make the moſt enticing and irreſiſtible Luſts, the objects of our greateſt deteſtation.

6. The conſideration that the Son of God, clothed with our nature, ſhall judg the World, *affords ſtrong Conſolation* to his People, and is a motive of great terror to the Wicked. How comfortable is it to his People that he who loved them above his Life, and was their Redeemer on the Croſs, ſhal be their Judg on the Throne? *He is the ſame Jeſus Chriſt, yeſterday, to day, and for ever*; the ſame indulgent Saviour, in the exaltation of his Glory, as when under ſufferings,

ferings, reproach and ſhame. He is deſcribed in that glorious Appearance, by the conjunct Titles of his Majeſty and Power, *The*
Tit. 12. 13. *Great God*, and of his Compaſſion and Mercy, *Our Saviour*, to ſignify his Ability and Affection to make them happy. When he comes with a heavenly Train of Angels to Judgment, he will be as tender of his Servants, as when he ſuffered for them in his humble ſtate. He that paid their Debt, and ſeal'd their Pardon with his own Blood, will certainly publiſh the Acquittance. How is it poſſible he ſhould condemn thoſe for whom he died, and who appear with the impreſſions of his reconciling Blood upon them? How reviving is it that Chriſt, whoſe Glory was the end and
Phil. 1. perfection of their Lives, ſhall diſpoſe their ſtates for ever? that he

he, who eſteems every act of their Charity and Kindneſs done to his Servants as done to himſelf, ſhall diſpenſe the bleſſed Reward? *Then the King will ſay to them plac'd on his right hand, Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World.* Mat. 25. O the tranſports of joy to hear thoſe words from his Life-breathing Lips! The Prophet breaks forth in an Extacy, *How beautiful are the feet of the Meſſengers of Peace, thoſe that bring gladtidings of Salvation? but how much more beautiful is the face of the Author of our Peace and Salvation?* O how full of Serenity, and Clemency, and Glory! The expectation of this makes them languiſh with impatience for his Coming. Tho the Preparations of that Day are ſo dreadful, when *the Sun ſhall be darkned, and the* Acts 2.

Moon

Moon turned into Blood, and the Stars fall like leaves in Autumn, yet 'tis ſtiled a *Day of Refreſhment* to the Saints. But how dreadful will his Coming in Majeſty to Judgment be to the Wicked! *They ſhall ſee him whom they have pierced*, and with bitter lamentation remember the indignities offered to him. What Excuſes can they alledg, why they did not believe and obey the Goſpel? Our Saviour revealed high Myſteries, but confirm'd them with great Miracles. He requir'd ſtrict Holineſs, but offer'd divine Grace to enable Men to do his Will. *He poured forth his Spirit upon them*, but their hearts were as hard as the Rocks, and as barren as the Sands. Then he will reproach them for their undervaluing *neglect of the great Salvation*, ſo dearly purchaſed, and ſo freely and earneſtly offered to them:

Videtis vulnera quæ inflixiſtis, agnoſcitis latus quod pupugiſtis, quoniam & per vos, et propter vos apertum eſt, nec intrare voluiſtis. Aug.

them: for their obſtinacy, that the Purple ſtreams that flow'd from his Crucified Body, that all the Sorrows and Agonies of his Soul were not effectual Perſwaſives to make them forſake their Sins: for their *preferring the Bramble to reign over them*, Satan the Deſtroyer of Souls, and ungrateful *rejecting the true Vine*, the bleſſed Saviour, who by ſo many miraculous mercies ſollicited their love and deſerved their ſervice; this will make the ſentence as juſt as terrible, and the more terrible becauſe juſt. This will exaſperate the anguiſh, that the Goſpel ſhall be a *ſavour of Death to them*; and the bleſſed Redeemer pronounce them *curſed*, and diſpatch them *to everlaſting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels for ever.* The Judgment of the Redeemer will be more heavy than that of

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the Creator. For all the riches of his goodneſs which they deſpiſed, ſhall be the meaſure of their guilt and woes. All the means of Grace uſed for their converſion, but fruſtrated by their perverſneſs, ſhall riſe up in Judgment againſt them. Juſtice will revenge the abuſe of Mercy. Do they hope to ſoften the Judg by Submiſſions and Deprecations? alas, he will be inflexible to all their Prayers and Tears. The Lamb will be then a Lion arm'd with terrours for their deſtruction. Or can they appeal to an higher Court to mitigate or reverſe the Sentence? No, his Authority is ſupream, and confirm'd by the immutable Oath of God. Or, do they think to reſiſt the execution of the ſentence? Deſperate Folly! The Angels, notwithſtanding their numbers and ſtrength, could not for a moment

Rom. 14.

ment escape his revenging hand. The whole World of Sinners is of no more force against his Wrath, than the light dust against a whirlwind, or dry Stubble against devouring Fire. Or do they think by a stubborn Spirit to endure it? Self-deceiving Wretches! If the correction of his Children here, tho allayed, and for their amendment, make *their beauty and strength consume away as a moth*, how insupportable will the Vengeance be on his obstinate Enemies? *Who knows the power of his Anger?* who can sound the depths of his displeasure?

7. The Consideration of eternal Judgment should be a powerful Incentive to prepare our selves for it. 'Tis the Inference the Apostle makes from the certainty of our appearing before the righteous Judge, *Wherefore we labour* 2 Cor. 5. 9.

that whether present, or absent, in this or the next life, *we may be accepted*
2 Cor. 5. 9. *of him.* This was his great Design, his chief Care, his Duty and his Glory: Never did any person more ardently aspire, and ambitiously endeavour for the obtaining a Kingdom, than he did to secure his own Acceptance with the Lord. In order to this I will lay down the Rules of our Acceptance in that Day, and conclude the Argument.

1. Unfained Faith in the Lord Jesus is absolutely necessary, that we may be accepted. This is such a belief of his all-sufficient Merits, and his merciful inclination to save us, that the guilty and self-condemned Sinner entirely consents to the terms of the Gospel, as well as to the priviledges of it, with a reliance upon his Merits, and a resolution to obey his Precepts.

cepts. He is a *Prieſt on a Throne, a Prince, and a Saviour*, and ſo muſt be acknowledged and received. Upon this condition his Righteouſneſs is freely imputed to us for our Juſtification unto Life, without which we muſt periſh in our Sins. For,

1. The beſt Saints are guilty and deeply obnoxious to the *Law*, and the Judgment of God is invariably according to Truth; ſo that appearing in their Sins, they will be caſt for ever. God's Tribunal, like that of the ſevere Roman Judg, is *Reorum Scopulus*, a Rock that daſhes in pieces all the Guilty that come to it. Therefore the Pſalmiſt ſo earneſtly deprecates, *Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, O Lord; for in thy ſight ſhall no Man living be juſtified.* And the Apoſtle, tho' a tranſcendent Saint, deveſts himſelf of his

own righteouſneſs, that he may be entirely covered with the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and renounces all things, that *he may be found in him as his Surety* in that Day of Accounts, and obtain Pardon by virtue of his Satisfaction for Sin. We cannot perfectly obey the Commands, nor appeaſe the Diſpleaſure of God: but the expiatory Sacrifice of Chriſt propitiats the Divine Juſtice. This alone can make us ſtand in Judgment before the *fiery Law*, and *the fiery Tribunal*, and the *Judg who is a conſuming Fire*, to all the Guilty that appear in their Sins before him. The Blood of the Mediator has ſprinkled the Throne of God in Heaven, and our Conſciences being ſprinkled with it by a purifying Faith, we may appear before God the Judg of all with an humble confidence, and enter into the

Holy

Holy of Holies, the Celeſtial Sanctuary with joy.

2. Not only the pardon of our Sins, but the acceptance and rewarding of our ſervices with eternal Glory is upon the account of our Saviour's compleat Righteouſneſs. There are defilements in the perſons, and defects in the works of the Saints. Their moſt holy and fervent Prayers are Rev. 8. 3. perfum'd by the Incence of his Interceſſion, and ſo become grateful to God. Our beſt Vertues are mix'd and ſhadowed with imperfections; but in him all Graces were conſpicuous in their conſummate degrees. Our Obedience, ſuppoſing it perfect, is of no deſert: *When we have done all, we are unprofitable Servants*: but his Obedience was infinitely meritorious by the union of the Deity with his humane Nature, and is

the foundation of the excellent Reward. Not that his Merits derive a value to our Works to make them worthy of eternal Glory: as ſome noble Mineral infuſed into Water, that is in it ſelf without taſte or efficacy, gives it a medicinal tincture and virtue; for this is impoſſible, ſince the infinite Dignity of his Perſon, and his moſt perfect habitual and actual Holineſs, that are the fountains and reaſons of his Merits, are incommunicable to our perſons and works. For this would render us equal to our Saviour, and our works to be divine as his. But the active and paſſive Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is ſo ſatisfactory and meritorious, that God is pleaſed graciouſly to reward with the Crown of Life the mean ſervices of thoſe who are by a lively and purifying Faith united to him.

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2. Sincere Obedience, that is, an uniform and entire reſpect to all the Commands of God, will alone be accepted in that day: for his Authority runs through all, and binds them on the Conſcience. *David* had this Teſtimony from God himſelf, that he *was a Man after his own heart, that fulfilled all his Will.* And St. *John* refers the deciſion of our ſtate to this, *If our hearts condemn us* of any allowed Sin of omiſſion or commiſſion, much more *God will, who is greater than our hearts, and knows all things.* But if the illuminated tender Conſcience condemns us not of inſincerity, *we have confidence towards God*, that he will ſpare and accept us notwithſtanding our frailties, and give free and ſafe acceſs into his preſence. The lives of many are chequer'd with a ſtrange diſparity, they are reſtrain'd from

1 John 3. 20, 21.

ſome Sins of apparent odiouſneſs, but indulgent to others; they are ſtrict in ſome duties, but looſe and ſlack in others, as if they hop'd by way of commutation to be accepted of God, to expiate their Delinquencies in one kind by ſupererrogating in another. Some are painted Phariſees in the duties of the firſt Table, very exact in the formalities of outward Devotions, but groſs Publicans in the duties of the ſecond: careleſs of Juſtice and Equity, and Charity to Men: Others are in appearance ſtrictly moral in the diſcharge of their duties to Men, and negligent of their obligations to God. But partial obedience can never endure the trial of Conſcience, much leſs of God. For what is the weak light of our minds, to the pure eyes of his Glory? It will make us liable to inward re-

rebuke now, and to open confusion at the last. St. *Paul's rejoycing was from the Testimony of his Conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity he had his conversation in the World*: and, as he expresses it in another place, it was his *daily exercise to have a Conscience void of offence towards God, and towards Men.* 2 Cor. 1. 12.

Tho our conquest of Sin be not compleat, yet our resolution and endeavours must be to mortify it in every kind. Tho' our obedience has not the perfection of degrees, we must be equally regarding the Divine Law. If there be any secret-favoured Sin either of omission or commission, it will render our Petitions unacceptable at the Throne of Grace, and our Persons at the Throne of Judgment; *If I regard Iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear my Prayer.* The Law requires the per-

performance of our Duty without abatement, or denounceth the penalty without allay or mitigation: the Gospel has not relax'd the strictness of the Law as 'tis the Rule of Life, but as it was the condition of obtaining Life. Sincere obedience is accepted by that gracious Covenant, where the *Legal Perfection* is wanting: but that is indispensibly required of all. I may illustrate this by a passage of *Alexander the Great*, who being desirous to learn Geometry, applied himself to a skilful Instructer in it. But his warlike disposition made him more capable to conquer than to measure the Earth, so that tired with the first Propositions, he desir'd his Master to make the Scheme more clear and plain, and easy to him: ‖ To whom the Master replied, that the *Theorems* of that Sci-

Cui præceptor: ista inquit omnibus eadem sunt, æque difficilia. Senec. *Epist.* 91.

Science were equally difficult to all, and requir'd the ſame attention of mind to underſtand them. Thus the Goſpel of Mercy requires of all ſincere Sanctification, and ſerious endeavours to perfect Holineſs in the Fear of God, and without this none ſhall be exempted from Condemnation.

To the ſincerity of Obedience, I ſhall add a more reſtrained Notion of it as reſpecting Religion. The duties of Piety conſiſt of an outward and inward part; and the one without the other is but as a Carcaſs without a quickning Soul. Now there will be an exquiſit Anatomy of the Heart in that Judgment, a diſcovery of all the Principles and Motives by which Men were acted, and then he that is a Saint inwardly, *in the Spirit*, who with pure aims and holy affections hath ſerved God,

ſhall

ſhall have *praiſe of him.* And thoſe who have us'd God to injoy the World, that have aſſumed pretences of Piety for ſecular ends, ſhall be reproved. This will be a cauſe of wonder in that day, that many *who are highly eſteemed by Men* as excellent Saints, *ſhall be an abomination to God.* That in the broad way to Hell thouſands go thither is ſad beyond expreſſion, but not ſtrange at all: but that in the path of Heaven any ſhould deſcend to Hell, is aſtoniſhing. That thoſe who live without God in the World, in the prophane neglect of his Worſhip, in a diſſolute diſorderly courſe, ſhould fall under Condemnation, is believed of all: but that thoſe who have appeared zealous in Religion ſhall be at laſt rejected, is contrary to univerſal expectation. And not only the groſs

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Hypocrite that deceives others, but he that deceives himſelf by the external practice of holy Duties without correſpondent lively Affections; that prayes with that coldneſs as if he had no deſire to be heard, and hears with that careleſneſs as if he had no deſire to be ſanctified by the Word, and is converſant in other parts of divine ſervice in that ſlight manner, as if he had no deſign to be ſaved, ſhall by a convincing upbraiding Light ſee his Wickedneſs in diſhonouring that God whom he pretended to worſhip, and neglecting his Soul. When the Upright as pure Gold ſhall be more radiant by the Fire, the Inſincere like reprobate Silver ſhall not endure that ſevere trial.

3. The frequent diſcuſſion of Conſcience, and reviewing our ways, is neceſſary in order to our com-

comfortable appearing before our Judg. This is a duty of conſtant revolution: for while we are in fleſh, the beſt Saints, notwithſtanding all their vigilance and diligence, are overtaken by ſurpriſal, and ſometimes overborn by ſtrong temptations; and 'tis more neceſſary to beg for daily pardon, than for our daily bread. Under the Law if any one had by touching a dead Body contracted Uncleanneſs, he was to waſh his Cloaths in the evening, and not to lie down in his Uncleanneſs. This was typical of our duty, that we ſhould waſh away our ſinful defilements every day in the purifying Fountain of Chriſt's Blood, *that is ſet open for Sin and for Uncleanneſs.* And the method of the Goſpel to obtain the grant of Pardon, and our comfortable ſenſe, and the bleſſed

effects

effects of it is this, there muſt be a mournful ſight, and ſerious acknowledgment of our daily ſins, and a judging our ſelves by the domeſtical tribunal in our breaſts as worthy of Condemnation; for tho we cannot ſatisfie Divine Juſtice for the leaſt Sin, we muſt glorify it: and with humility and fervency deſire that God would graciouſly forgive our renewed Sins, with unfeigned Reſolutions and Care againſt them for the future. Thus we are to ſue out our Pardon for Sins committed every day. And whereas many *Errors* in regard of our frailty, and their fineneſs, do ſlip from us, we ſhould with contrite Spirits implore the Divine Majeſty *to cleanſe us from our ſecret Sins*, ſuch as through ignorance or inadvertancy eſcape from our obſervation. If we are obliged to be reconciled

Pſal. 19. 12.

to

to an offended or offending Brother before the night, and *the Sun must not go down upon our wrath*, much more to be reconciled to an offended God, that his displeasure may be atoned. The morning and evening Sacrifice was a Figure of the constant use of Christ's Merits and Mediation for us; The secure neglect of renewing our Repentance for our renewed Sins, deprives us of the comforts of the Covenant, and will make the thoughts of Judgment as heavy as Mountains upon the Conscience, when 'tis awakened out of its slumber. But when the Soul's Accounts are kept clear with Heaven every day, O what a blessed Rest does the penitent Believer enjoy in the Favour of God! O the divine calm of Conscience when our Debts are cancell'd in the Book of God's Remembrance!

membrance! If we ſhould be unexpectedly ſummoned to appear *before the Judg of all*, the ſight of our Sins will rather excite thankful affections, and joyful praiſes of God for his Mercy, that he hath pardoned them; than fearful deſpairing thoughts of his Mercy, that he will not pardon them.

And as this conſidering our ways leads to Repentance, and is a remedy for paſt Sins, ſo 'tis a powerful Preſervative from Sins afterwards. For as in War the greateſt care is to fortify the weakeſt part of a beſieged Town, and make it impregnable; ſo a Chriſtian by the experience of his infirmity and danger, will be more wiſe and wary, more circumſpect and reſolved againſt thoſe Sins whereby he has often been foil'd,

to prevent the daily incurſion, and ſudden ſurreption by them. And according to the degrees of our Innocence, we have confidence of Acceptance with God in Judgment.

4. Let us improve with a wiſe and ſingular diligence the talents committed to our truſt: for in that day we ſhall be reſponſible for all that we have received. All the Bleſſings we poſſeſs, whether natural, our Life, our Faculties, our Endowments, our Health and Strength; or Civil, Honour and Dignity, Riches and Reputation; or Spiritual, the Goſpel in its light and power, the graces and aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt, as they are gifts from God's Love, ſo they are talents to be imployed for his Glory. We are Stewards, not Pro-

Proprietaries: for the Supream Lord does not relinquish his right in our Blessings, that we may dispose of them at our own pleasure, but hath prescribed Rules for our using them in order to his Glory, our own Good, and the Benefit of others. And 'tis sad to consider that usually those who enjoy the greatest gifts render the least acknowledgments, and the most abundant in Favours are most barren in Thankfulness. Time, that unvaluable treasure, that is due to God and the Soul, the price of which arises from the work of Salvation to be done in it, how is it squander'd away? Conscience would blush at the serious reflection that every day so much is spent in the business of the World, or Pleasures, and so little redeemed for Communion with the holy God: that as

in the Prophetick Dream the lean Kine devoured the fat, ſo unconcerning vanities take up that time that ſhould be employed for our laſt and bleſſed End. While time is miſerably waſted, the Soul lies a bleeding to everlaſting Death. More particularly, we ſhall be accountable for all the days of *the Son of Man* that we have ſeen, all the ſpecial ſeaſons of Grace: theſe we ſhould improve for our Eternal Advantage, to prepare us for the Divine Preſence above. But alas, the Lord's Day that is conſecrated for the immediate Service of God, and ſhould be entirely ſpent in it, and in things that have a neceſſary ſubordination to it, yet neither the enforcement of Duty, nor incitations of Love prevail upon the moſt, conſcienciouſly to imploy it in ſpiritual affairs. If they

afford

afford their preſence at the Publick Worſhip 'tis thought enough, and, as if the reſt of the Day was unſanctified time, they waſte it in either Complemental Viſits, or Secular Buſineſs, in Recreations, or things impertinent to their Salvation.

Riches are an excellent Inſtrument of doing good: Gold is the moſt precious and extenſive Metal, and by a marvellous Art an Ounce may be beaten out into ſome hundred Leaves: but 'tis a more happy Art by giving it, to enrich our own Souls, and ſupply the Neceſſities of many others. But great Eſtates are often uſed to foment Mens vicious guilty affections, Pride, and Senſuality; and 'tis called || Greatneſs & Magnificence to waſte them in ſumptuous Vanities. I inſtance in theſe Talents, becauſe they are

|| *Nullis vitiis deſunt pretioſa nomina.* Plin. lib. 73.

uſually abuſed to the diſhonour of the Donor. If the ſlothful Servant that hid his ſingle Talent in a Napkin, and returned it without advantage to his Lord, was *caſt into outer darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, a fearful Image of what will befal all unprofitable perſons, how ſevere will their Accounts be who laviſh out their numerous Talents to gratify their carnal Appetites, and betray the Bleſſings of God to his enemy the Devil? Only the wiſe and good Servant that with prudent Contrivance and zealous Endeavours improves his Talents, ſhall from the gracious Lord, in whom are all attractives and remuneratives of our ſervice, receive an excellent Reward.

5. Another Rule of our Acceptance at the laſt Day is, That we muſt with Courage and Zeal main-

maintain in our rank and places the Cauſe of Chriſt. For thus he declares expreſly, *Whoſoever ſhall confeſs me before Men, him alſo will I confeſs before my Father which is in Heaven. But whoſoever ſhall deny me before Men, him alſo will I deny before my Father which is in Heaven.* Matth. 10. 33, 34. When the truth, purity, and power of Religion, in Doctrine, Worſhip and Practice, is diſcountenanc'd and over-born, our Saviour commands, and will reward our undiſcouraged viſible Conſtancy in it. He will not only reign in our hearts, but be honoured with our lips, and in our converſations. Rom. 10. We uſurp the title of Chriſtians unleſs we adhere to our Duty in deſpite of all oppoſition. The temptations that uſually withdraw Men from confeſſing and glorifying Chriſt, are ſuch as work upon the paſſions of

Fear and Shame. And the consideration of the last Judgment will fortify us against both.

1. Sometimes Religion exposes the Professors of it to the loss of all temporal enjoyments, and of Life it self. And when the Honour of our Saviour requires such a Service of us, when that Confirmation is necessary to recommend Divine Truth to the belief & affections of others, when our chearful and couragious Example in suffering would animate those that are fearful to constancy of Confession, then from Cowardise to withdraw our Testimony, is to betray him again. When our Duty is attended with extream Dangers, then the sincerity and perfection of our Love to Christ is brought to the strictest trial. As true Carbuncles are discovered in the night, for the darkness re-

redoubles their ſplendor: ſo the fidelity of Chriſtians is evident in Perſecutions that enflame and excite their Zeal to magnify the Name of Chriſt unto the Judgment of the World. *There is no Fear in Love, but perfect Love caſts out Fear.* 1 Joh. 4. 18. But Fearfulneſs hinders the expreſſing acts of Love to Chriſt, and betrays to Apoſtacy. For as every Paſſion is a Perturbation, ſo eſpecially Carnal Fear that blinds and diſturbs the mind, and hinders the ſerious conſideration of the reaſons of our Duty, and thoſe motives to perſevere in it, that are the fountains of our ſtrength. From hence the timerous are often treacherous, and Faith lies buried under the cold pale Aſhes of Fear. Now the irregularity of this Paſſion is beſt cured by directing it to the moſt powerful Object. As the

Rod

Rod of *Moſes* ſwallowed up the Rods of the Magicians, ſo a ſtronger Fear will ſubdue that which is in a weaker degree. Our Saviour therefore threatens thoſe that for the fear of Men (*who can but kill the Body*) dare not own and defend his Truth and Cauſe, that he will renounce them before his Father in the great Day, the immediate conſequence of which will be the *deſtruction of Body and Soul in Hell.* If Earthly Potentates had a Juriſdiction over Heaven, if Men were to be tried by their Laws at the laſt Day, if their Power extended to Eternity, they might exact unlimited Obedience to their Wills, but Conſcience is a more deſirable Friend and terrible Enemy than *Cæſar*, and all temporal Tribunals are ſubordinate and accountable to the Supream and Eternal: there is *one*

Matth. 10. 31, 32, 33.

Law-

Lawgiver and Judg, who is able to save, and to destroy for ever. It is the worst Perdition to secure our selves by the neglect of our Duty, when we ought to perish for the Glory of our Saviour. *He that saves his Life shall lose it.* Jam. 2. Mark 8. 35.

2. Shame wounds deeper the Breasts of some than Violence. *Zedekiah* would rather expose his Kingdom and Life to the fury of the Chaldean Armies, than be himself exposed as an object of derision by surrendring it. And Satan who understands the temper of Mens Spirits, suits his temptations accordingly. The Purity and Holiness of Religion, expresst in the actions of the Saints, is by the scurrilous *Reflections* and bitter *Sarcasms* of prophane Persons made *contemptible.* This is as foolish and malicious, as if a slave should reproach the Son of a Jer. 38, 19.

King

King that he was like his Father in his Countenance and actions; for by how much the reſemblance of God's Holineſs appears with more evidence and eminence in their lives, their divine relation is more certainly and juſtly to be acknowledged. Yet how many are aſhamed of this Glory? And Zeal to vindicate the Honour of Religion is traduc'd and vilified either as the effect of deſigning Faction, or of the indiſcretion and raſhneſs of a weak Judgment and ſtrong Paſſions. In every Age the faithful Servants of God are by ſcornful titles deſpiſed: *We are accounted*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *the off-ſcouring of the World.* But a generous Chriſtian looks upon diſgrace for the ſake of Chriſt as his honour. The Apoſtles *rejoyced that they were accounted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for his Name.*

1 Cor. 4. 17.

Name. 'Tis ſaid of the Baptiſt, *he was not that Light, but came to bear witneſs to that Light*: intimating as if that were the next degree of dignity to it. And our Saviour, ſpeaking of the Proofs of his divine Miſſion, reckons up the Witneſſes of ſuch dignity, that 'tis not poſſible for ſacred Ambition to aſpire to higher Honour than to be in Conjunction with them: *they are John the Baptiſt, his Miracles, his Father, and the Scriptures.* Acts 5. 41. John 5. 33, 36, 37, 39.

Let us appeal then from the light depraved Fancies of carnal Men, to the wiſe and faithful Judgment, and Authority of the Son of God. He will at the laſt Day in the preſence of his Father and all the Court of Heaven, give an incomparable Crown to all that have *deſpiſed Shame* for his ſake. But thoſe vile Spirits, whoſe Courage of Straw is quell'd by vain

vain opinion, and the reproaches of Fools, and have deſerted the Cauſe of Chriſt, ſhall then be clothed with Confuſion; for this we are aſſured by our Judge, *that whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of*
Mark 8. 38. *me and my words, in this adulterous and ſinful generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.* If the unnatural Brothers were aſtoniſh'd when the Governor of *Egypt* told them, *I am Joſeph whom ye ſold*, how much more will falſe Chriſtians, when the Lord of Glory ſhal tell them, I am Jeſus whom for baſe ſhame ye denied? How will it confound thoſe abject Wretches to be a ſpectacle of abhorrence and ſcorn before that Univerſal Glorious Confluence? They would chuſe rather to be covered under the ruins of the World. If we value

and

and desire the approbation of the King of Angels, if we fear a final rejection from him, to obtain the one, and avoid the other, we must entirely adhere to his Interest, without any respect to the eyes and esteem of the perverse deceived World.

6. A cordial beneficent Love to the Saints, is a requisit qualification of our Acceptance in the Day of Judgment. *Then shall the King say to them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World. For I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in Prison, and ye came unto me.* The union and endearments betwixt Christ and his People are mutual and reflexive; Matth. 25. 34, 35, 36.

flexive; as they are extreamly tender of his Glory, ſo he is concern'd in all that is done to them. And tho the perfection of Love conſiſts more in the affection of the heart than in outward offices, yet our Saviour moſt congruouſly produces in Judgment the conſpicuous effects of Love to them, the ſupplying their wants, allaying their ſorrows, owning them when obſcured and depreſt by afflictions, and injuriouſly treated by others. This love of ſervice that is directed and exerciſed towards the Saints, for the Image of God ſhining in them, becauſe they are the Children of God, and Members of Chriſt, and therefore extended to all in whom the reaſon of that Love appears, ſhall be glorioufly rewarded: For he interprets what is done upon his Account to thoſe who are his own

own by ſo many dear titles, as done to himſelf. And what is more becoming his excellent Goodneſs than to reward his works of Mercy with ſaving Mercy? But thoſe who when Chriſt preſents himſelf to them in his poor diſtreſſed Members, and ſolicits their aſſiſtance, to protect them from injuries, to refreſh their ſorrows, to ſupport them in their exigencies, thoſe that have ability but want affection to do them good, and incompaſſionately neglect the ſuffering Saints, ſhall be ſentenc'd to be tormented with the Apoſtate Angels for ever. What indignity is it to the Son of God, that thoſe for whom he ſhed his Divine Blood, ſhould be in leſs value and regard with many, than the Dogs and Horſes maintained for their pleaſure? And if thoſe *on the left hand* ſhall

be condemned to eternal Fire, for the coldneſs of their Love, how terrible will the Judgment be of thoſe that from the heat of their enmity outragiouſly perſecute the Servants of Chriſt for his ſake, in their Perſons, Eſtates, Reputations, that with a worſe than barbarous inhumanity ſeek their ruine? Is there any Sin of a more mortal guilt? The infernal Furnace is ſeven-fold heated for the puniſhing ſuch wickedneſs.

To conclude this Argument, let us obſerve the Command of our Saviour, *To watch and pray always, that we may be counted worthy to ſtand before the Son of Man.* Theſe are Duties of univerſal influence into our Lives, the one prevents careleſneſs, the other vain confidence in our ſelves, and the conſideration of Judgment to come, is the greateſt motive to them,

and

and the first principle of Holiness. This should work more powerfully in us, considering the Day of Death is equivalent to the Day of Judgment to every person; for then a particular Sentence decisive and irrevocable passes, that shall be publish'd at the last Day. Methinks the terrors of the Lord should engage our Souls and Senses to a continual preparation for his Coming. 'Tis represented so as to affect the Eye, and keep it vigilant: *Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all.* Jude 15. *Behold, he comes in the Clouds, and every Eye shall see him.* Rev. 1. 9. And to call the Ear, and make it attentive; *The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven, with the voice of the Arch-Angel, and with the Trump of God.* 1 Thess. 4. 16. How circumspect should we be in all our ways, since every action shall be

reviewed by our Judg. St. *Peter* ſtrongly infers from the diſſolution of the World, as a moſt cogent Argument, that we ſhould be exactly and univerſally holy: *ſeeing then all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought we to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs?* 2 Pet. 3. 11, 12. But the conſideration of the eternal Judgment immediately ſucceeding the deſtruction of the World, O how powerful ſhould it be upon Conſcience and the Affections to regulate the whole courſe of our Lives with a final reſpect to God's Tribunal.

In ſhort, That which we read of the ſucceſs of the Apoſtle's preaching to the Athenians upon the preſent ſubject, the Immortality of the Soul, compriſed in the Reſurrection of the Body and the future Judgment, is the ſame in all times and places: *And when they*

they heard of the Reſurrection of the Dead, ſome mocked; and others ſaid, We will hear thee again of this matter; and others believed. There are three differences of the Hearers of this Doctrine of ſo great importance: ſome deride it as an extravagant fancy: ſome believe it, and yield up themſelves entirely in obedience to it: others do not abſolutely reject it, as the firſt, nor accept it, as the ſecond, but have a Conjecture, or ſlight ſuperficial Opinion of it, or a ſpeculative Aſſent as to a hiſtory of things that do not concern them, and defer the ſerious conſideration and applying of it to themſelves. And of this third ſort (O Grief!) are the moſt of thoſe who are Chriſtians in name. They delay till Death, the ſolemn reflecting upon the final Judgment, and the inevitable Conſequence of it, a bleſſed

Act. 17. 32, 34.

blessed or miserable estate for ever. And whereas the Apostle, who had infallible assurance of God's Love, did with an holy severity and self-denial abstain from all Carnal Complacencies that might hazard the never-fading Crown; 1 Cor. 9. 27. *I keep under my Body, and bring it into subjection, lest by any means when I have preached to others, I should be a Cast-away.* ‖ Yet the most live and die in a secure state, without preparation to appear before the Presence of his Glory.

‖ *Va miseris nobis qui de electione nostra nullam adhuc Dei vocem cognovimus, et jam in otio quasi de securitate torpemus.* Greg. *lib.* 29. *Moral.*

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